

The relationship between client work and personal and
professional development in Counselling Psychology training

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Abstract

Personal and professional development activities are a central component of Counselling Psychology training due to regulatory requirements and the high value Counselling Psychology places on the therapist's "self". Most research on the facilitation of personal and professional development focuses on specific training activities such as personal therapy and personal development groups. However, it is widely acknowledged that personal and professional development are also facilitated by aspects of training and life that are not designed for their facilitation. This research explores the relationship between trainee Counselling Psychologists' personal and professional development and their client work. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to analyse semi-structured interviews with six final year trainee Counselling Psychologists. Two main findings were identified: firstly, participants were unable to discuss their personal and professional development in relation to client work specifically; personal and professional development were facilitated by the relevance of specific experiences to individuals' needs and preferences rather than activities having a direct facilitative effect themselves. Secondly, participants did not engage in active personal development work, and this was not explicitly discussed or structured in training. These findings imply that trainees may not develop optimally: as personal and professional development are highly individualised and complex processes, research and training that focuses on specific training activities may fail to interrogate the complexity of why and how personal and professional development are facilitated. Regulatory and ethical implications are discussed alongside existing literature to suggest the beginnings of a personal development curriculum for Counselling Psychology training.

Reflexive Statement

It is widely suggested (e.g. Finlay & Gough; 2003; Smith, 2007; Willig, 2008) that it is impossible for the researcher to position themselves outside of or objective to the subject matter of their research. This reflexive statement therefore aims to facilitate the reader's awareness of my subjectivity on all aspects of the research. I have chosen to begin this thesis with reflexivity so that the reader will be aware of my relationship to the research throughout its process and will be able to gain an impression of how this relationship has changed over time. Firstly, I will focus on how my values, experiences and beliefs have shaped the research. Secondly, I will discuss how the research has affected or changed my beliefs about this research area.

I first became interested in the relationship between personal and professional development and client work due to my previous involvement in volunteering with The Listener Scheme¹. I noticed that Listeners experienced positive changes as a result of providing emotional support for others. I was initially interested in listening as a form of rehabilitation but as I was beginning my training as a Counselling Psychologist, I was also interested to see if I would experience similar positive changes to the Listeners as a result of working therapeutically with clients. When I became aware that research had suggested the existence of a relationship between the development of the self and positive therapeutic outcome, I became enthusiastic about conducting research in this area and learning more about the development of the therapist and client.

My initial beliefs about personal and professional development were idealistic; while I expected to experience academic challenges in training, I did not anticipate that the process of personal and professional development would be as personally challenging as I later experienced it to be. The difference between my idealistic beliefs and challenging experiences made me increasingly interested in this research topic: were my experiences "normal"? Was I suited to this kind of training? My first impression

¹ The Listener Scheme is a peer support scheme. Prisoners are trained and supported by Samaritans, using their same guidelines, to listen in complete confidence to their fellow prisoners (Samaritans, 2013).

of the literature did little to allay my anxieties; I wanted clear answers but the research area was broad and complex. When conducting a review on the facilitation of personal development in the first year of training, I was distinctly aware of my own training experiences and tendency to search for certainty. My strong feelings towards this topic highlighted the importance of researcher reflexivity: as a trainee Counselling Psychologist investigating trainee Counselling Psychologists' experience of a process that I was also experiencing, personal reflexivity was essential. There was potential that my personal experiences and relationship to the topic could unwittingly bias my research in countless ways: for example, my need for certainty in early training could have biased me towards searching and critiquing literature and interpreting data in a way that would provide the certainty I wanted at the time, and/or for focusing on specific types of literature, critique and interpretation to answer or prove specific questions or theories that I had about my own personal and professional development.

In order to manage my biases from affecting different stages of the research, I engaged in several practical reflexive practices. At the literature review and discussion stage, I entered multiple search words (see Method 1.3) into library catalogues and databases and read the relevant available literature. This allowed me to read a number of different opinions on the subject matter of the research. I also reflected on my interpretations of literature and research on personal and professional development in light of my own presumptions about the topic in order to minimise the effects of my own biases on my interpretations. Interview questions aimed to facilitate discussion on participants' experience of the relationship between personal and professional development and client work and I encouraged each participant to answer questions and discuss the research topic in a way that was meaningful to them in line with the phenomenological focus of IPA. Previous researchers on the facilitation of personal and professional development have suggested that trainees might be averse to disclosing negative experiences of the therapeutic process, (e.g. McLeod 1990) therefore much care was taken in developing an interview schedule that gave space to explore negative experiences. At the analysis stage, I reflected on my interpretations and my own researcher voice so that my interpretations stayed true to the intersubjective meaning-making process of the employed method. Reflections were written in a reflexive diary so that interpretations could be interrogated in

reference to my own experiences. Smith's (2011) guidelines for maintaining and evidencing the quality of the analysis (see Method 2.3.7) also helped me to distinguish between intersubjectivity and researcher bias; while IPA theory posits that meaning is constructed intersubjectively thus it is impossible for researchers to present an "objective" account of participants' experience, the researcher must ensure that there is sufficient evidence across participants for each interpretation and theme to moderate the position of the researcher.

As explored in the Analysis and Discussion chapters, participants tended to respond to the questions either very anxiously or very defensively. Participants also rejected the idea that client work could be discussed separately from other activities or events that facilitated their personal and professional development, and were able to speak freely about negative and positive aspects of their training. Although on reflection I also experience difficulty disentangling the contribution of specific activities in the facilitation of my own development, my involvement with the academic investigation of personal and professional development, where developmental activities are investigated separately, meant that my own experience of personal and professional development was managed throughout the interview process. Participants' ability to respond to the interview questions and topic allows the inference that my own beliefs or presuppositions did not consciously bias the research.

Although I endeavored to monitor my biases throughout the research process, the results could have been affected by unconscious dynamics between the participants and myself, as we were all trainee Counselling Psychologists at the same stage of training. The findings of this research suggest that the strong anxious and defensive positions aroused in participants during the interview related to fundamental flaws in the way in which personal development is currently researched and trained (see Discussion), however there is a possibility that complex dynamics based on similarities and differences between the participants and myself could also account for the strong emotional reactions to the topic of this research. For example, many of the participants said that they had chosen to participate in this research because they had not conducted the interviews for their own research yet and they wanted to "see how it was done". Holly, for example, who presented as particularly anxious in her interview, was very concerned that she answered initial interview questions

“correctly”. When I asked her how she would define the concepts personal and professional development, she asked me if her response was “all right”, and towards the end of the interview she remarked, “this is a really complex topic but I’m sure you know loads about it”. It is possible that Holly’s anxious response related to her positioning me as an “expert” and that her inability to discuss the topic related to her being anxious about the process of the interview rather than anxiety towards the topic itself. Paradoxically, Lachlan was closer to the end of his training than me and was writing up his thesis at the time he participated in this research. His defensive position and confidence in his responses could relate to relational dynamics where he was the “expert” and I was the “novice” researcher.

As well as the potential for participants’ role as students to impact on the data, it is also possible that my own experiences and beliefs about the topic could have interacted with participants’ process and affected the data and my competence as an interviewer in many ways. Continuing the aforementioned examples of Holly and Lachlan, it is possible that my need for certainty was unconsciously communicated to Holly, exacerbating her anxiety, and that Lachlan protectively identified with my need for certainty and thus responded defensively and confidently.

While it is possible that the above dynamics were at play during the interviews, and that these could have biased the data, the novice/expert dynamics explored in relation to interviewer/interviewee are similar to the dynamics between “expert” trainers and “novice” trainees and as such can be seen as a microcosm of the dynamics at play between trainers and trainees within the training course, as explored further in the discussion chapter. However, the potential for complex process arising from similarities between researchers and participants is a potential issue that could be explored further in research (see Limitations and Further Research 4.6). Furthermore, it is possible that the anxiety experienced by some participants during the interview could relate to the dissonance between using an IPA method, which focuses on subjective meaning, and the exploration of definitions within an academic context, where evidenced academic opinions are valued higher than subjective meanings. This and other reflections on the IPA method will be further investigated in the Limitations and Further Research sections.

Although I engaged in reflexive practices throughout the research process, my relationship to the research was significantly affected by my engagement in it and the process of my own personal and professional development. Some of the biases that I experienced in early training, such as my preference for certainties, became less prevalent throughout the research process and my training in general, and I became more able to appreciate the complexities of trainees' and my own personal and professional development, however it is possible that some of this residual anxiety may have been evoked through the process of the interviews. This evolution is reflected in the following thesis, which suggests that research on the facilitation of personal and professional development also needs to evolve to represent the complex process of personal and professional development.

Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

The “self” of the counsellor has become increasingly important to the philosophy and practice of counselling and psychotherapy in recent years (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2010). It has been suggested (Donati, 2003) that research which found the quality of the therapeutic relationship to be predictive of therapeutic success or failure (e.g. Lambert, 1992) and that all therapeutic approaches are as successful as each other, (e.g. Cooper & McLeod, 2011; Loborsky, Singer & Luborsky, 1974; Wampold, 2001) has led to the convergence of different therapeutic approaches in their views of the counsellor’s self into “common factors”: the client-counsellor relationship and the counsellor’s self (Clarkson, 1995). Moreover, theorists have suggested that personal and professional aspects of the self are interrelated and mutually enhancing (e.g. Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1996; Wilkins, 1997), thus positioning the development of the self of the counsellor as influential in the development of technical as well as personal therapeutic skills and knowledge.

“Professional development” and “personal development” have been described as the two main conceptual strands of counsellor development (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1996). While the professional skills and knowledge involved in therapeutic work have traditionally been the main focus of training, the more recent acknowledgement of the importance of the counsellor’s self in successful therapeutic outcome is also represented in training, with personal development becoming a compulsory component of training for all Counselling Psychology trainings and most counselling courses (Rizq, 2010). Many rationales for the importance of personal development work have been suggested which highlight the interaction between the personal and professional aspects of the counsellor’s self. These include the belief that the counsellor must have an awareness and understanding of their own issues before they can successfully and ethically help others (Donati & Watts, 2005), that therapeutic skills such as the understanding of countertransference can be enhanced through development and self-awareness, (Jacobs, 2003) and that personal development also helps to protect the counsellor from career burnout, as the practice of counselling can be demanding on the counsellor’s own emotional resources (Wilkins, 1997).

This research seeks to gain a greater understanding of how personal and professional development can be facilitated in Counselling Psychology training. The facilitation of personal development is the most discussed and debated area of the personal development literature. Most research focuses on gaining a critical awareness of the methods by which trainers aim to facilitate personal development in training, therefore the majority of the current literature focuses on the facilitation of personal development through specific training activities such as personal therapy, personal development groups and reflective journals. The facilitation of personal development in training through such activities is an area that has stimulated much debate (e.g. Robson & Robson 2008; Williams, Coyle & Lyons, 1999) as traditional activities such as personal therapy (e.g. Greenburg & Staller, 1988; Kumari, 2011; Williams et al., 1999), personal development groups (e.g. Irving & Williams, 1995; Knight Sperlinger & Maltby, 2010; Robson & Robson, 2008) and personal development journals (e.g. Wright, 2005) have not always been experienced positively by all trainees.

Although there is a focus in the current facilitation literature on specific training activities, some authors (e.g. Johns, 1996) have acknowledged that personal development is a complex process that can be facilitated by activities or events that are not designed specifically for its facilitation. Some investigations into trainee counsellor development have found that the practice of counselling has the greatest facilitative effect on the development of the counsellor (e.g. Donati, 2003; Orlinsky, Bottermans & Hunt, 2001).

This literature review aims to provide a theoretical and conceptual framework for personal and professional development in the context of Counselling Psychology training before reviewing the state of the literature on the relationship between client work and personal and professional development in order to gain a greater understanding of the importance of client work in the facilitation of personal and professional development. Firstly, a conceptual framework will be provided for the literature review by presenting definitions of personal development, professional development and the self. Secondly, a theoretical framework for the literature review will be provided by reviewing theories that enhance our understanding of the process

of personal and professional development. Thirdly, the review will investigate how personal and professional development are facilitated in Counselling Psychology training by reviewing how effective specific personal development activities are in facilitating personal and professional development. Fourthly, literature on the relationship between client work and personal and professional development will be reviewed, a rationale will be proposed for the importance of further research in this area and the research question of this thesis will be presented.

1.2 Relevance to Counselling Psychology

Research on trainee personal development has been positioned as a Counselling Psychology priority by authors such as Donati and Watts (1999), who suggest that Counselling Psychology's commitment to both "scientist practitioner" and "reflective practitioner" paradigms gives the discipline greater scientific rigour than other psychotherapeutic disciplines that also position the therapist's self as centrally important to the success of therapy. Moreover, Donati and Watts suggest that the theoretical diversity of Counselling Psychology allows for multiple and balanced readings of personal development.

The importance of personal development to the discipline of Counselling Psychology, and its relation to professional development, is reflected in the HCPC Standards of Proficiency (2010), which state that Counselling Psychologists "must be able to critically reflect on the use of self in the therapeutic process" (HCPC, 2010, p. 25). This is not required for any other applied psychologist who engages in clinical work, most notably Clinical Psychologists. The Division of Counselling Psychology has specified that methods for facilitating personal development must be included in Counselling Psychology training programmes, stating that trainees should be "actively and systematically engaged in personal development work so that a greater understanding of personal issues is developed" (British Psychological Society, (BPS), 2006).

1.3 Method

In order to obtain the literature relevant to this topic, I searched for journals on specialised databases such as EBSCOhost and PsycINFO. I also carried out manual searches for journals and books at London Metropolitan University Library, Senate House and the British Library. I searched the internet and the named library catalogues using keywords such as “client work and development”, “client work”, “counsellor development”, “personal development”, “professional development”, “reflective practitioner”, “the self”, “models of personal development”, “models of professional development”, “Counselling Psychology training”, “personal therapy”, “personal development groups”, “Counselling Psychology trainees” and “the self in counselling”. Searches on “personal development” yielded literature that was relevant to the definition of personal development as well as personal therapy and personal development groups. Journal searches for “client work” and “client work and development” proved too general, and research of different professions and on different topics was found. Some journal articles and books on the topic of personal and professional development in counselling and psychotherapy referred to the relationship between client work and personal and professional development. I applied the research technique of “snowballing” (Ridely, 2008) to the relevant literature, whereby I read the reference lists of relevant literature in order to find more literature that was relevant to this topic.

As there was a scarcity of literature on this topic and due to the lack of a unified definition of personal development and professional development among academics, literature on the concepts personal development, professional development, personal growth, learning and change was included in the review, as authors’ definitions of such concepts may converge or diverge with the definitions of personal and professional development used in this review. However, research that focused on processes that did not correspond with the broad definitions of personal development and professional development used in this review was excluded. Similarly, due to the scarcity of Counselling Psychology literature and research on the facilitation of personal development through client work, and its wide relevance to other therapeutic disciplines, this critical literature review uses the concept “counselling” to describe information relevant to the professions of counselling, Counselling Psychology and

psychotherapy. Literature and research from these different areas is included in the review, and the profession from which individual pieces of work originates is specified.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

This literature review begins by providing definitions for the concepts “personal development”, “professional development” and “the self” in order to clarify the topic of enquiry in this research.

1.4.1 Defining personal development and professional development.

Despite the central position of personal development and professional development in Counselling Psychology training, academics (e.g. Donati & Watts, 2005; Hall, Harris, Hay, Biddulph & Duffy, 1999; Williams & Irving, 1996) have highlighted that the concepts “personal development” and “professional development” are nebulous, implicit, “loose terms that everybody in the profession uses but nobody can define” (Rizq, 2010, p570).

Academics suggest that it is essential to clearly define personal development and professional development to ensure that the assessment of personal and professional development is scientifically rigorous as trainers often view personal development as the most significant aspect of counsellor training (e.g. Johns, 1996), regulators state that personal and professional development must be facilitated in training (e.g. HCPC, 2010), and trainees are selected for their potential for personal development and assessed for personal development during training (e.g. Donati, 2003). Moreover, Williams and Irving (1996) suggest that literature and training practices that fail to define personal development may be flawed as the results and practices have implicit meanings and aims which create confusion for readers and trainees in terms of the specific processes that are being measured and examined.

Although researchers and academics suggest that it is important to define personal development and professional development, there is tension within personal and professional development research and practice as researchers and academics also

acknowledge that there are methodological issues with the presentation of fixed and universal definitions and guidelines because personal and professional development are individualised processes that are influenced by and dependent on multiple factors such as theoretical orientation and personal circumstances (Donati and Watts, 2005). In consideration of the suggestion that it is important to define and set the parameters for the specific developmental processes but acknowledging that the process and meaning of personal and professional development is idiosyncratic, this literature review defines personal development and professional development broadly yet precisely, so that the reader is simultaneously aware of the processes that are being investigated while allowing research of different theoretical perspectives to be reviewed.

A number of academics have debated what personal and professional development are (Elton-Wilson, 1994; McLeod, 1996; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1996; Wilkins, 1997; Williams & Irving, 1999). Donati and Watts (2005) aimed to synthesise the definitions of previous authors of personal development and professional development in order to provide a composite definition for personal and professional development based on the findings of other researchers. While they do not conclude their synthesis with fixed definitions for personal development and professional development, they highlight specific features and competencies that relate to both processes.

Donati and Watts (2005) define professional development as a process that relates to the development of therapeutic skills and knowledge and personal development as a broader process that encompasses the development of everything else that is involved with working therapeutically with clients, such as the enhancement of self understanding, personal qualities and attributes which can be used both to benefit the client in the therapeutic encounter and safeguard the counsellor against professional burnout. While the concepts are distinct, Donati and Watts suggest that personal development and professional development are related and mutually enhancing processes.

This research is concerned with the investigation of personal development and professional development, as they are processes that are both theorised to improve

therapeutic outcome (Johns, 1996; Williams & Irving, 1999). This research does not investigate “personal growth”, which is another concept investigated by researchers in this area (e.g. Donati & Watts, 2005; Johns, 1996; Williams & Irving, 1999). While theorists have suggested that personal development is a purposeful activity that can be planned and structured, and is entered into with the purpose of improving professional practice, personal growth is defined as an organic process that cannot be planned and is primarily of benefit to the practitioner (views synthesised by Donati & Watts, 2002). Although personal growth is theorised to be a by-product of personal development and this research acknowledges that personal development and professional development are related processes, this research does not specifically investigate personal growth as this research is interested in how development can be facilitated and personal growth is a process that cannot be facilitated.

The synthesised definitions of Donati and Watts (2005) are utilised in this literature review, as their definitions are sufficiently broad for different perspectives of personal and professional development to be reviewed while ensuring that the reader is aware of the parameters of the processes that are being investigated. Donati and Watts’s (2005) synthesis of definitions for personal and professional development can be categorised as theoretically pluralistic as they do not align with a particular theoretical perspective (Cooper & McLeod, 2011). Pluralistic definitions of personal and professional development are suitable for this research topic as different theoretical approaches to counselling have converged in the importance that they place in the development of the practitioner since research has consistently found that the success of therapy is contingent on a positive therapeutic alliance rather than the particular therapeutic approach (e.g. Wampold, 2001). Thus searching for literature on personal and professional development according to Donati and Watts’ (2005) definitions has allowed literature of all different theoretical perspectives to emerge.

Adopting Donati and Watts’ (2005) definitions in the literature review allowed a wealth of material on different theoretical perspectives to be reviewed. The subsequent sections of this thesis are conceptually open so that the meaning participants ascribe to their personal and professional development can be represented in accordance with a pluralistic theoretical perspective. A pluralistic position transcends the problem of defining personal and professional development as

considered by Donati in his PhD thesis: “There may be limitations regarding the extent to which something as idiosyncratic and evolving as personal development can be defined” (Donati, 2003, p.114). Allowing participants to define and discuss their personal and professional development in a way that is meaningful to them allows a greater understanding of individual perspectives on personal development and how these relate to definitions proposed by previous academics.

1.4.2 Defining the self.

As found with the concepts personal and professional development, Harré (1998) suggests that the self is often undefined in broader literature on selfhood due to its complexity. This may explain why research on personal and professional development typically does not engage with definitions of the self. The absence of a definition of the self in research produces the same issues as the absence of a definition of personal and professional development: it is not possible to determine what specific process or entity is being investigated. It is essential that the self is defined, as it is a concept that encompasses a myriad of meanings and contexts that influence the parameters of its enquiry and results.

The concept of the self has intrigued and divided religions, philosophers, psychologists and writers throughout the ages. Individuals and academics of different religious viewpoints have differing beliefs about the existence of a soul and whether the self or soul ceases to be, is immortal or is reincarnated after death; philosophers have debated the self in multiple ways, such as in the relationship between the mind and body (e.g. Plato; Aristotle; Descartes), and the relationship between the body and the environment (e.g. Laing, 1961; Heidegger, 1962); and different therapeutic schools in psychology differ in their characterisations of the self. For example, McLeod (1993) characterises the psychodynamic image of the person as like an animal, driven by instinct and out of control; the humanistic as botanical, and growing in helpful or unhelpful conditions; and the cognitive behavioural as computer-like, mechanistic and badly programmed.

This thesis is interested in the self in the particular context of client work. The inquiry of this thesis into the relationship between personal and professional development and

client work holds implicit assumptions about the concept of self; the interest in the self in relation to development and specific activities suggests the existence of a malleable self that is separate to, but developed from, interactions with the environment. The investigation of Counselling Psychologists' perspectives of their changing self in relation to the environment follows existential philosophers' exploration of subjective phenomenology (Baldwin, 2013) and is consistent with the initial existential philosophy of Mead (1934), who viewed the self as a process rather than a structure that emerges from interaction with the environment.

While existential philosophers, developmental psychologists and theorists of different psychological schools are broadly united in their view of the self as a process that is influenced by the environment, theorists have different interests in the self. For example, developmental psychologists such as Erikson (1963) were interested in how the self develops, whereas philosophers such as Harre (1998) are interested in defining the self). Furthermore, theorists have different approaches to investigating the self; for example, Husserl (1982 [1913]) believed that the environment must be separated from perception in order to understand the essence of personal meaning, whereas Heidegger (1962 [1927]) suggested that context is fundamental meaning and the two cannot be separated. In the context of Counselling Psychology, different theoretical models, and theorists within theoretical models, have different conceptualisations of the self and the development and amelioration of psychopathology.

Aside from the implicit assumption that the self is changeable in relation to the environment and the investigation of the self in the context of therapeutic work, this research does not align with one particular conceptualisation of self. Instead, it seeks to understand trainee Counselling Psychologists' perspectives of their development, which are inevitably influenced by trainees' own unique conceptualisation of self, according to their own religious, philosophical, psychological, cultural and political viewpoint. This research takes the position of theoretical pluralism so that participant's meanings of the development of the self through the specific activity of client work can be derived from the interview data.

Please see Method 2.2.1 for a discussion on how the researcher's definition of self relates to the method of analysis.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Now that definitions have been provided to clarify the concepts personal development, professional development and the self, a theoretical framework for the process of personal and professional development will be provided by reviewing existing models and theories of development and by suggesting psychological theories that explain the underlying processes of the models and theories.

1.5.1 Theories of personal development and professional development.

A number of theories of counsellor development, change and identity have emerged in recent years (e.g. Fitzpatrick, Kovalak & Weaver, 2010; Gibson, Dollarhide & Moss, 2010; Irving & Williams, 2001; Ronnestad & Skovholt, 2003; Sheikh, Milne & MacGregor, 2007). This interest has been driven by multiple areas of enquiry from career development to developmental psychology, by questions that have arisen from "common effects" research (e.g. Wampold, 2001) about the aspects of the counsellor that are successful to therapeutic outcome, and the rise of importance placed in evidence-based practice. Individual theories of personal and professional development have differing foci, such as understanding the development of theoretical orientation (e.g. Fitzpatrick, Kovalack & Weaver, 2010) or developing a model of personal development (e.g. Sheikh, Milne MacGregor, 2007). This short review aims to condense and summarise the broad findings of the literature before discussing the intricacies of the particular theories that are most present and therefore most influential in this research area.

Theories of the process of personal and professional development are broadly united in their position that the process of development and identity formation involves the experience of a shift in focus from gaining knowledge about therapeutic techniques and the self from the outside world (through supervision and understanding the self according to the social world), to gaining understanding about therapeutic techniques and the self from the self (from previous clinical experiences and acquired self-

knowledge) (e.g. Auxier, Hughes & Kline, 2003; Brott & Myers, 1999; Irving & Williams, 2001; Gibson, Bennet, Dollarhide & Moss; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992, 2003). Thus in relation to models of self, theorists of development suggest that the environment plays a greater part in the early development of the self and that the environment becomes less influential as individual perceptions of self are accommodated and stabilised.

The three most cited and quoted theorists on the process of personal and professional development are Ronnestad and Skovholt (2003) or Skovholt and Ronnestad (1992), Schon (1983, 1984, 1987) and Kolb (1976, 1984, 1987).

Skovholt & Ronnestad (1992) created an eight-stage model of counsellor professional development through the career-span from training to retirement. Their theory was derived from the results of interviews with 100 practitioners about their professional development. Skovholt and Ronnestad's (1992) theory suggests that counsellors are dependent on their supervisors in making clinical decisions at the beginning of training, and that as the counsellor develops, they become more self-directed and individualised in their practice. Central to their theory is the idea of "professional individuation", which suggests that the personal and professional aspects of the self of the counsellor diverge after initial training, when trainees begin to become aware of the impact of their self and unresolved issues on their practice and have difficulty integrating this with a large amount of new clinical skills and theories in practice. As training progresses, this new self-knowledge and technical knowledge is assimilated, allowing the personal and professional aspects of the self to converge.

While stage theories of counsellor development and Skovholt and Ronnestad's (1992) work provide a picture of the developmental experiences that counsellors can expect at different stages, other theories have focused on how this takes place more generally in terms of learning. Kolb (1976, 1984, 1987) created a model of experiential learning and a typology of learning styles to explain how people learn and can enhance their learning, while Schon (1983) focused on the specific role of reflection in the enhancement of learning.

Kolb's (1976, 1984, 1987) model of experiential learning integrates theories of learning styles and learning process. The theory suggests that optimal learning occurs by adopting four different styles of learning at four different steps of the learning process. Firstly, the individual has an experience (concrete learning style), secondly, the individual observes the experience (reflective learning style), thirdly, the individual understands and draws conclusions from the experience (abstract learning style), and fourthly, the individual experiments by applying what has been learned into practice (active learning style).

Schon's (1983) conceptualisation of the "reflective practitioner" is one of the main paradigms of Counselling Psychology identity and philosophy (Rizq, 2008). Schon (1987) suggests that individuals must critically reflect on and examine their practice in order to improve their practice. While the role of reflection is essential to his theory, Schon (1987) describes reflective practice as a dialectic process which is linked with action: "A dialogue of thinking and doing through which I become more skilful" (1987, p.31). While Schon (1983, 1987) emphasised the importance of reflection and action, he posited that educators, supervisors and coaches are essential to the learning process as they act as both challengers and supporters through the course of development.

Schon (1983, 1987) suggests that there are three types of reflection: reflection-on-action, in which the learner reflects on an action past and engages in retrospective sensemaking; reflection-in-action in which reflection occurs as an attempt to "stop and think" in the midst of action, a time during which action can be modified; and knowing-in-action, the most tacit of reflective processes in which knowledge is embedded in the action itself and is rarely considered at a conscious level. Schon (1984) suggests that learning will remain tacit unless there is active engagement in reflecting on and processing learning, thus reflection in action and on action is fundamental to personal and professional development.

Now that theories of personal and professional development have been presented, it would be useful to provide a psychological rationale for the link between personal and professional development and client work in order to further explain the psychological process of personal and professional development and to contextualise

the theories of personal and professional development in Counselling Psychology theory. The theories of mentalisation and the wounded healer illuminate our understanding of how the therapist may achieve greater understanding of self and others through working with clients, and how this increased understanding facilitates the management of the therapeutic process.

1.5.2 The relationship between psychological theory and theories of development.

1.5.2.1 Mentalisation.

Skovholt and Ronnestad's (1992) theory of professional individuation, Kolb's (1976, 1984, 1987) model of experiential learning and Schon's (1983, 1987) theory of reflective practice can be further conceptualised by the psychological theory of mentalisation. Mentalisation can be broadly defined as the ability to understand that one's own mind is separate to the minds of others and that each person's mind contains a different model of reality that affects their behaviour (Fonagy, Gergely, Jurist & Target, 2002). The ability to understand the mental models of self and others allows the accurate perception and interpretation of one's own and others' behaviour in terms of intentional mental states (such as needs, desires, emotions, beliefs, goals, purposes and reasons) (Bateman & Fonagy, 2006). Mentalisation is rooted in multiple diverse psychological theories and overlaps with many differing psychological theoretical orientations. As such, Allen, Fonagy & Bateman (2008) suggest that mentalisation is the most fundamental common factor among psychotherapeutic treatments.

Although mentalisation based therapy was initially developed to treat individuals who had limited mentalisation capacity, such as people who had been diagnosed with borderline personality disorder, mentalisation theory suggests that individuals may experience difficulties in mentalising during times of change and crisis (Fonagy, Gergely, Jurist & Target, 2002) and psychological training in the psychotherapeutic professions has also been found to be a challenging time when one's models of reality are questioned and challenged (e.g. Rizq, 2006; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 2003). Skovholt and Ronnestad's (1992, 2003) theory of professional individuation can be

conceptualised as representing the mentalisation process; the divergence of the personal and professional aspects of the self can be understood as representing difficulties in mentalising due to the examination of mental models of self and other. The convergence of the personal and professional aspects of the self over time can be a representation of an increased mentalisation capacity, where models of self and other have been adapted and accommodated.

Mentalisation theory can further illuminate the process of development or learning as theorised by Kolb (1976, 1984, 1987) and Schon (1983, 1984, 1987). Their models for learning can be understood as instructions for mentalisation as all theories suggest that learning (and mentalisation) can be enhanced and facilitated by constantly exploring and appraising one's own thoughts and emotions. Mentalisation theory suggests that individuals experience difficulty mentalising as a result of an insecure attachment style, and mentalisation-based treatment aims to improve the client's mentalisation capacity by forming a secure attachment relationship to a therapist who provides a relational context in which it is safe for the individual to explore their own conscious and unconscious mind and the mind of another. While trainee counsellors' personal development challenges may not be a consequence of insecure attachment styles that developed in childhood, arguably trainees may become insecurely attached to a number of objects at the beginning of training, when their models of self and reality are questioned. The training context provides opportunities for models of self and others' reality to be explored, for mentalisation to be facilitated, for professional individuation to be achieved and for the relational aspect of Schon's reflective practice (1983, 1987) to be maintained through multiple training activities, including client work. Furthermore, Sugarman (1985) suggests that Kolb's (1976, 1984, 1987) model of experiential learning provides a theoretical framework for the counsellor's role in the exploration of their clients' difficulties in counselling, thus the counsellor's ability to mentalise may facilitate mentalisation in their clients.

1.5.2.2. The Wounded Healer

While mentalisation theory can provide a psychological theoretical framework for the process of personal and professional development, and may begin to explain how the counsellor's development may impact on their clients, the archetype of the wounded

healer provides greater insight into how client work might be a particularly important facilitator of personal and professional development for both the client and the therapist in training and beyond.

Jung (1951) suggests that the therapeutic encounter is a dialectical process “in which the doctor, as a person, participates just as much as the patient” (Jung, 1951, p.116). Although personal development work in training facilitates the counsellor’s awareness of their own “wounds”, Jung (1951) theorises that the counsellor’s wounds may be activated when their client’s wounds are similar to their own, catalysing the commencement of a collaborative unconscious therapeutic relationship that develops both counsellor and client. According to Jung (1951), the counsellor’s own unconscious conflict to their shared wound will dominate the countertransference and be examined by the counsellor. The counsellor’s concurrent forces for woundedness and healing are transferred to the client, allowing the client to access their inner healer and thus ameliorating the wound for both therapist and client.

While the theory of the wounded healer suggests that the therapist’s own unresolved issues help the therapeutic process, personal development is essential as the therapist is invited to consider their own wounds, whether conscious or unconscious, in order to position themselves in a way that allows the client to dominate the transference.

1.6 Contextual Review

This section aims to review how the main personal development activities in Counselling Psychology training are theorised to contribute to personal and professional development by briefly reviewing the literature on the relationship between personal therapy, personal development groups, reflective journals and personal and professional development.

1.6.1 Personal therapy.

Counselling Psychology trainees must attend a minimum of 40 hours of personal therapy as part of their training (BPS, 2006) as the enhancement of the therapist’s self-awareness is theorised to contribute to positive therapeutic outcome. The BPS

theorises that attending personal therapy leads to “a greater understanding of personal issues [...] through: An understanding of therapy from the perspective of the client; An understanding through therapy of their own life experience; and an ability for critical self-reflection on the use of self in the therapeutic process” (BPS, 2006). Six rationales for the inclusion of personal therapy reoccur throughout the literature, (Grimmer & Tribe, 2001; Macaskill, 1988; Norcross, Strausser-Kirtland & Missar, 1988) as follows: Firstly, attending personal therapy is theorised to improve the emotional and mental functioning of the therapist, allowing them to facilitate positive change in their clients. Secondly, personal therapy is theorised to give the therapist a greater insight into personal and interpersonal therapeutic process, allowing them to better distinguish between transference issues and their own unresolved issues. Thirdly, personal therapy is theorised to alleviate some of the personal stresses of training and life, allowing therapists to avoid work burnout. Fourthly, attending therapy is theorised to be a socialisation process, validating psychotherapy as a legitimate career choice. Fifthly, attending personal therapy is theorised to facilitate the therapist’s understanding of the interpersonal needs of their own clients. Sixthly, the experience of therapy is theorised to be an opportunity for learning from observing the therapist and participating in therapeutic interventions.

Despite the existence of an espoused theoretical link between therapists’ personal therapy and a positive therapeutic outcome for clients, the inclusion of mandatory personal therapy in Counselling Psychology and other training programmes is a topic that has stimulated much debate and a large body of research exists that aims to understand the relationship between personal therapy and personal development and assess potential ethical issues.

Surveys have consistently shown that the overwhelming majority of psychotherapists, (Orlinsky, Ambhul, Ronnestad, Davis, Gerin, Davis, Willutzi, Bottermans, Dazord, Cierpka, Aapro, Nuchheim, Bae, Davidson, Frus-Jorgensen, Joo, Kalmoykove, Meyerberg, Northcut, Parkes, Scherb, Schroder, Shelfer, Stwine, Stuart, Tarragona, Vasco, Wiseman, and the SPR Collaborative Research Network, 1999) UK chartered Counselling Psychologists (Williams, Coyle & Lyons, 1999) and Irish Clinical and Counselling Psychologists (Rothery, 1992) experience personal therapy positively. However, other survey studies have found that attending personal therapy can be

potentially harmful to some trainees, causing relationship problems and depression (Makaskill, 1988).

Qualitative studies have also found mixed results. While some research has found that personal therapy increases the therapist's ability to understand and use therapeutic process (Wiseman & Shelfer, 2001), reflect on the impact of the self on the client and therapy (Rizq & Target, 2008) and increase the therapist's effectiveness by teaching empathy, warmth, acceptance and genuineness: factors which are deemed to be important in therapeutic change (Cooper & McLeod, 2011), other research (e.g. Grimmer & Tribe, 2001) has found that personal therapy is not experienced as helpful by all trainees. Furthermore, no research has evidenced a link between the therapist having personal therapy and positive therapeutic outcome for their clients (Cooper & McLeod, 2011; Grimmer & Tribe, 2001).

Despite the finding that the majority of (trainee) counsellors experience personal therapy to be beneficial to their personal and professional development, the finding that some trainees experience personal therapy to be harmful, and the lack of a strong evidence base for a relationship between personal therapy and positive therapeutic outcome raises questions concerning the efficacy and ethics of personal therapy as a personal development activity.

1.6.2 Personal development groups.

Research has found that personal development groups are run differently in Counselling Psychology programmes (Moller, Alilovic & Mundra, 2008), with Rizq (2008 p. 580) describing personal development groups as "a somewhat generic term referring to a range of rather diverse theoretical and organisational approaches to interpersonal learning, growth and development". While personal development groups are not "group therapy" (Robson & Robson, 2008), the three main psychological approaches' theories of group therapy can illuminate the psychological rationale for the inclusion of personal development groups in Counselling Psychology

training². Psychodynamic group theorists such as Foulkes (1984) suggest that being in a group has particular therapeutic value as psychodynamic therapy views psychological problems as being interpersonal in origin and the group setting facilitates unconscious processes such as transference, countertransference and defense mechanisms, which can be explored by the facilitator and group members (Barnes, Ernst & Hyde, 1999). CBT theorists suggest that being in a group allows individuals to practice and master interventions such as thought challenging and behaviour modification, which in turn improve psychological wellbeing (Furlong & Tian, 2002). From a Humanistic perspective, theorists (e.g. Rowen, 1999) have suggested that group work can help to facilitate congruence and allow group members to move between the fourth and fifth stages of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (from looking for self-esteem from others to experiencing it for ourselves).

In line with psychological theories' perspectives of group therapy, researchers of personal development groups (e.g. Lennie, 2007; Robson & Robson, 2008) suggest that the aims of group work are to enhance self-awareness and self-exploration and to identify "blind spots", or personal difficulties that are in need of personal development. However, as found in research on the relationship between personal therapy and personal and professional development, quantitative research (e.g. Irving & Williams, 1995; Knight, Sperlinger & Maltby, 2010), qualitative research (e.g. Moller & Rance, 2013; Robson & Robson, 2008) and research of mixed methodologies (e.g. Lennie, 2007) has found that while some trainees or some experiences of group work are perceived to be beneficial to personal and professional development, as groups facilitate psychotherapeutic skills and personal development, other individuals and experiences are perceived as negative. For example, Robson & Robson (2008) conducted a thematic analysis on interviews of student counsellors' perceptions of participating in a personal development group over a three month period and found that group members may fear that the group setting is "unsafe" due to power imbalances between the group members and group facilitator, a lack of clarity in terms of confidentiality and a lack of a clear rationale for their participation in group work during training.

² The main schools are presented here to highlight points of difference. It is however acknowledged that there are theoretical differences between schools so the categorisations used here are somewhat simplistic.

Academics have sought to reconcile potential group difficulties by identifying factors that affect the success of groups. For example, Knight, Spalinger and Maltby (2010) developed a reflective practice group questionnaire to interview 24 qualified Clinical Psychologists on their experience of participating in a personal development group. Their results suggested that group size, group facilitators and previous group experience predicted participants' levels of value and distress, with participants experiencing more value from the group when groups were smaller in size, when they understood the psychological model that was being used by the facilitator, and when group members had previous experience of group work. Irving and Williams (1995) found that there was a strong positive correlation between individuals' perceptions of group work and their preferred learning style, suggesting that some individuals are more likely to experience group work as a worthwhile activity than others. However, Moller and Rance (2013) found that individual trainees hold conflicting positive and negative feelings about group work, suggesting that perceptions of group work are complex and influenced by a number of personal and environmental factors. Corey (2000) theorises that underlying factors such as learning styles, differences between groups in different trainings and the amount of information given by trainers about the aims, methods and outcomes of personal development groups must be reconciled to improve the efficacy of personal development groups as a personal development activity.

Other researchers and theorists suggest that the training context may prevent group work from being experienced as a helpful activity for trainees. Yalom (1995) identified specific process factors that he considered to be essential to positive therapeutic outcome in groups. He theorised that groups must be safe and supportive, and there must be sufficient engagement and honest feedback to permit change (Yalom, 1995). Moller and Rance (2013) theorise that personal development groups have unique characteristics that may prevent the safe and supportive environment in which change can be facilitated. Firstly, the group members are in academic competition with each other; secondly, the group members are in contact with each other outside of the group; thirdly, students may be indirectly assessed by their contribution to the group; and fourthly, where course trainers facilitate the group, there is potential for dual roles.

As found with personal therapy, there is a lack of a strong theoretical rationale to support the link between the attendance of personal development groups for trainees and positive therapeutic outcome for clients (Galbraith & Hart, 2007). Moreover, Lennie (2007) found that there was no relationship between how comfortable trainees felt in their personal development group and self-awareness, highlighting that the assumption of this literature area that enjoyment equates to development may be unfounded.

While research has found mixed results for the relationship between personal development and personal development groups, the finding that personal development groups can cause “long-term psychological distress which causes people to engage in maladaptive and defensive behaviours” (Hall, Hall, Harris, Hay, Biddulph & Duffy, 1999, p.139), and that “some may be damaged by it” (Irving & Williams, 1999, p.139) coupled with a lack of rationale for the way that groups are run in Counselling Psychology training (Moller, Alilovic & Mundra, 2008) has ethical implications as trainees are required to participate in an activity that they may not want to participate in without an evidence base for its personal and professional benefit.

1.6.3 Reflective journals.

Moon (2006, p. 2) defines reflective journals as the “accumulation of material that is mainly based on the writer’s processes of reflection”. Based on the work of Schon (1987), reflective journals are theorised to enhance the trainee’s awareness of the process of their changing impressions, feelings, difficulties and issues both in personal and professional domains (Rizq, 2010). Moon (2006) theorises that writing reflective journals facilitates personal and professional development by providing personal support, establishing personal and professional identities, developing practice, exploring experience and widening awareness, facilitating the organisation of future areas of personal development, and supporting and facilitating reflection on other elements of training. Despite the use of reflective journals in many counselling and Counselling Psychology training courses there is a lack of literature relevant to the relationship between reflective journals and personal and professional development within the therapeutic disciplines.

Sutton, Townend and Wright (2007) produced qualitative research that explored the use of reflective journals in a CBT training course. They found that trainees experienced several benefits, including the improved reflection and self-knowledge. However, the study also found that, similar to the findings of research on personal therapy and personal development groups, trainees were unaware of the requirements of the journals or the criteria by which they were assessed, which Sutton, Townend and Wright (2007) related to feelings of anxiety and depression expressed by some trainees in response to writing their reflective diary. Sutton, Townend and Wright (2007) recommend that trainers are clear and explicit in their rationale, guidelines, expectations and assessment criteria of reflective journals in order to reduce trainee distress.

1.6.4 Summary of Personal Development activities

Most research on the facilitation of personal development has perhaps naturally focused on activities in training programmes such as personal development groups, and compulsory activities outside of training such as personal therapy, especially as research has not always found these methods of facilitating personal development to be beneficial for all (Greenburg & Staller, 1988; Williams, Coyle & Lyons, 1999). Differences in learning styles, as identified by Irving & Williams (1995), have been suggested as one of the reasons for trainees' differing evaluations of personal development groups (Robson & Robson, 2008), as well as a lack of an explicit rationale for the inclusion of the activities and the criteria by which trainees are assessed (e.g. Sutton, Townend & Wright, 2007). We know less about other aspects of training and practice which may facilitate personal development in trainees, despite anecdotal evidence (e.g. Kottler & Carlson, 1995; Sandmaier, 2003) and survey studies (e.g. Donati, 2003; Orlinsky, Bottermans & Hunt, 2001) which have suggested that the practice of counselling is the most important aspect of training in facilitating personal development.

1.7 Client Work

While anecdotal accounts of therapists (e.g. Kottler & Carlson, 1995; Rogers, 1961; Sandmaier, 2003) and survey studies (e.g. Donati., 2003; Orlinsky, Bottermans & Hunt, 2001) have suggested and found that client work is the most important facilitator of personal and professional development, anecdotal accounts and survey studies cannot empirically explain how and why client work might be experienced as an important facilitator of personal development. Macran and Sharipo (1998) posit that it is not possible to gain a straightforward relationship between specific activities and personal and professional development due to the complexity of this topic and as such they suggest that that qualitative counsellors' accounts of how they feel their client work has been influenced by their work may produce more valid results.

1.7.1 Qualitative studies.

There are a handful of qualitative studies that aim to understand counsellors' experience of client work in terms of learning, change and development. This section will firstly give a broad summary of the research findings and research methods of existing research before presenting a more in-depth analysis of specific studies. The studies will be critically evaluated in relation to their contribution to the research area, in comparison to each other, and in relation to theories of development and method. Unanswered questions and gaps in the literature will be identified.

Studies have found that experiences of providing therapy facilitate the learning of therapeutic skills, as well as lessons about the importance of the therapist's self and the therapeutic relationship as a vehicle for client change (Nielsen, 2008; Stahl et al., 2009; Turner, Gibson, Bennets & Hunt, 2008). Stahl et al., (2009) and Turner et al. (2008) found that the effects of learning from clients increased counsellors' self-esteem and self-awareness, which had a positive effect on their personal as well as professional lives. One particularly interesting commonality is that all studies found that all experiences of providing therapy were viewed positively (i.e. useful for personal and professional development); although some studies found that counsellors endure negative experiences while practising counselling (e.g. emotional challenges), these experiences were found to lead to positive outcomes through the learning and

subsequent change and development that occurred as a result of them (Nielsen, 2008; Stahl et al., 2009; Turner et al., 2008). This differs to some findings of research on the relationship between personal development and other training activities, which found that negative experiences in personal therapy and personal development groups were not ultimately perceived as positive experiences as they did not facilitate personal and professional development. It is therefore important to further investigate this finding by reviewing individual studies to interrogate the possibility of methodological issues that may have prevented negative experiences from being shared and to assess possible differences between the literature on client work and other activities that may explain the positive experiences of client work.

The majority of studies focused on gaining an understanding of counsellors' retrospective experiences of what they learned and how they have changed as a result of working with clients. One study chartered the process of learning and change longitudinally through a learning journal (Turner et al., 2008). Although studies describe what participants learned from working with clients, no studies have interrogated why and how participants experience a relationship between their personal and professional development and client work. Focusing on why and how client work is influential to personal and professional development would produce more detailed information about trainees' experience of development in action, which could provide an evidence base for personal development curricula in training.

Some studies used data from semi-structured interviews to gain their results, (Nielsen, 2008; Stahl et al., 2009) but others used data from written accounts of counsellor experience of client work where specific research questions were answered (Myers; 2001; Stahl et al., 2009; Turner et al., 2008;). Some studies asked counsellors to report their learning according to their experience with one client (Myers, 2001), but others asked participants to describe their experiences with clients in general (Neilson; Turner et al., 2008). While written accounts of client work may facilitate reflection on action (Schon, 1983, 1984, 1987), answering specific questions may not allow the intricacies of participant's unique experience to be provided. Further investigation is needed regarding the types of questions that participants are asked in order to assess the efficacy of existing research findings. Focusing on participants'

experience would produce more detailed and accurate accounts of development in terms of how and why personal and professional development are facilitated.

Studies also differed in their use of either homogenous or heterogeneous samples of participants, with some studies using heterogeneous samples in terms of counsellor experience (Myers, 2001; Neilsen, 2008; Turner et al., 2008) and/or theoretical orientation (Farber; Myers; Turner et al., 2008). Research (e.g. Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992) has found that, although there is variability, people at different stages of training experience personal and professional development differently. Research that includes participants at different stages of training is therefore limited in its potential to provide useful information on how and why development occurs at different stages of training and what trainees' development needs are. Likewise, research that includes participants of differing theoretical orientations fails to gain information on the relationship between client work and the aspects of personal and professional development that are especially important for particular theoretical orientations. However, an investigation of Counselling Psychology trainees' development would also include participants of different theoretical orientations due to the discipline's alignment with theoretical pluralism and as such a lack of sampling for theoretical orientation is a limitation of theoretically pluralistic research.

While some similarities have been found between individual pieces of qualitative research, differences in research methods limit the conclusions that can be made about these comparisons. Each piece of research will be critically evaluated below to provide a more comprehensive overview of their specific contributions and limitations.

Neilson (2008) conducted a phenomenological analysis on the results of interviews with seven qualified Norwegian Psychologists who had between seven and 12 years of clinical experience. Questions focused on what psychotherapists had "learned" as a result of their therapeutic work. The results suggest that participants begin to increasingly rely on their "felt sense" and depended less on theoretical knowledge in their therapeutic work as they become more experienced. This finding may relate to Schon's (1983; 1987) idea that as individuals learn they become proficient in "knowing-in-action", the most tacit of reflective processes in which knowledge is

embedded in the action itself and is rarely considered at a conscious level. Neilson's results were used to contribute to debates on whether psychotherapy is an art or a science rather than the relationship between client work and personal and professional development. The word "learn" could be perceived as relating to only positive experiences, or negative experiences that have led to learning and therefore positive outcomes. Consequently Neilson's study does not gain an understanding of participant "experience", as phenomenological research aims to do. Further research is needed regarding experience so that more detailed and accurate information can be obtained on the relationship between personal and professional development and client work.

Myers (2001) asked six Canadian therapists with experience ranging from five to 30 years to provide written narratives of how a therapeutic relationship with one client had facilitated personal "change". Myers (2001) found that therapists gain enhanced self-understanding, an appreciation of therapy as a partnership between therapist and client, and a deeper understanding of therapy as a process. Myers's (2001) findings may correspond with theories of mentalisation (Fonagy, Gergely, Jurist & Target, 2002) and the wounded healer (Jung, 1951). While Myers's (2001) research provides useful information on therapist experience, the focus on a significant experience with one client means that this research cannot provide information on a general relationship between client work and personal and professional development, or why and how development is facilitated. Furthermore, interviewing therapists about one client may have prevented participants from reporting negative experiences of client work as participants may have been more likely to report positive experiences when discussing one example.

Stahl et al. (2009) interviewed an almost homogenous sample of 11 USA Counselling Psychology student and 1 USA Clinical Psychology doctorate student in order to understand what Counselling Psychologists learn from clients. Participants at the same stage of training were included, in support of research and theories that have suggested and found that different stages of training correspond with different personal development stages (e.g. Irving & Williams, 2001; Ronnerstad & Skovholt, 2003). Participants who had been training for one year were recruited for the study, with the rationale that they would be "deeply into the experience and thus likely to be

good observers of what they had learned” (p. 377). A practice interview was conducted and found that participants responded with more detail when they were first asked about learning from one client. As such, participants were asked about their learning from one client in order to facilitate discussion on the topic, before they were asked about their learning through client work in general. Consensual research methodology was used to analyse the data as the researchers stated that it would allow for in-depth data concerning trainee experience. The study found that trainee Counselling Psychologists learn lessons about therapy and the self in relation to therapy, such as skills and increasing self-awareness, and lessons about clients, human nature and the therapeutic relationship. Stahl et al. (2009) suggested their findings were consistent with the transition of the “advanced student phase” to the “novice professional phase” of professional development suggested by Ronnestad & Skovholt (2003). These findings may also be enhanced by their possible relation to the theory of mentalisation, which provides a psychological explanation for the development of the increased understanding of self and others, as found in the research (Fonagy, Gergely, Jurist & Target, 2002).

Although Stahl et al. (2009) provided rationales for the use of a homogenous sample and the choice of asking second year trainee Counselling Psychologists about their experience of learning from one client in order to facilitate a broader discussion about the general relationship between their client work and learning, they did not engage participants in a discussion of why it was difficult for trainees to talk about their learning. Instead they provided two interviews; the second interview was conducted so that participants could inform the researchers of anything they had forgotten to say in the first interview. The trainees’ need for a second opportunity to discuss their development poses a question about whether learning had taken place, or what form their learning had taken. It is possible that participants experienced difficulty talking about their learning due to their stage of training; Skovholt and Ronnestad’s (1992, 2003) theory of professional individuation posits that the personal and professional aspects of the self diverge at the start of therapeutic training and do not converge until later in training. As such, research on final year trainees’ experience of the relationship between personal and professional development and client work would allow more detailed information about how and why personal development is facilitated to be produced.

Furthermore, the interview questions used by Stahl et al. (2009) may have biased participants' responses: Interview questions were open-ended but focused on what participants had learned from clients about themselves, human nature, clients, and how they had applied this learning to their practice (p. 378). The focus on learning in this research could also lead to the disclosure of only positive experiences as discussed in the previous critique of Neilson's (2008) research. Consensual research methods aim to understand experience rather than learning. Participants may not have had the opportunity to discuss ongoing development or negative experiences due to the focus on learning in interview questions.

Turner et al. (2008) investigated the occurring process of learning and change through client work by analysing the learning journal entries of two UK trainee counsellors over a nine month period. The two participants were two of the researchers and participants were required to reflect on their experience of client work by writing "what we learnt, how and where the learning arose, and how, if we were able to articulate it, the learning had affected us" (Turner et al., 2008, p. 175) in their reflective journals. Their data were analysed using heuristic methodology, which involved various research stages including immersion with the research, incubation from the research, and an illumination period, where new insights occurred spontaneously as a result of the unconscious processing in the incubation phase. Their composite experience was analysed according to their diary entries and their illuminations, which occurred two months after they had completed the collection of their data.

Turner et al. (2008) found that counsellors gained an improved awareness of themselves as a result of working with clients and that this led to changes in perspectives and increased self-confidence. Again, these findings can be enhanced by their possible link to the theory of mentalisation (Fonagy, Gergely, Jurist & Target, 2002). Turner et al. (2008) suggest that their most important findings relate to the process of learning, in time (e.g. sudden, gradual, visual), and in context (e.g. in session, writing case notes, riding a bike) and they link these findings to literature on the process of therapist change over time, such as Skovholt & Ronnestad, (1992). They suggest that writing about learning can be challenging, but that learning is

consolidated, clarified, and deepened by recording it in a journal. This finding may be explained by Schon's (1983, 1987) theory of "reflection on action".

Turner et al.'s (2008) study makes interesting contributions regarding the process of learning/development and the use of the reflective diary as a research tool to consolidate and deepen the process of learning/development. This might provide another suggestion as to why US Counselling Psychologists found it challenging to recall the effects of personal development in general during Stahl et al.'s (2009) study, leading them to ask about their experience with one client, which might be more memorable and therefore processed. According to Skovholt and Ronnestad (1999, 2003), participants' difficulties in talking about their development may be a consequence of their training stage. According to Schon's (1983, 1987) theory of reflection on action, their knowledge may not have been active and accommodated due to a lack of engagement in reflective practice. Turner et al.'s (2008) study summarised some of the findings from Turner's (2007) Ph.D. thesis, where she also investigated whether learning experiences were different between therapists who had reported a significant experience with a client with HIV, and those who had not. Turner found no qualitative differences between the two, which led her to instead focus on the process of change (2008) in order to gain more information about counsellors' experience of client work in general. Turner et al. (2008) conclude that "the learning trainee counsellors and psychotherapists experience as a consequence of their client work may disappear from their conscious awareness if it is not recorded" (p. 197), suggesting that the participants in Stahl et al.'s (2009) study may not have been actively engaged in the process of their personal and professional development, as supported by Schon's (1983, 1987) theory of reflection on action.

Despite Turner et al.'s (2008) contribution to our understanding of the process of therapist change, the reliability of their study can be questioned: In her Ph.D. thesis, Turner (2007) provided more information and disclosed that her fellow participant admitted that he was participating in order to help her. Turner (2007) realised that her data may be affected by the other participant's reasons for participating, therefore she completed the study on her own. However, her results are a composite of both participant experiences. Furthermore, like Neilson (2008) and Stahl et al. (2009), the relation of Turner et al.'s (2008) findings to Skovholt & Ronnestad (1992, 2003) may

be due to the questions around which their reflective journal entries were structured. Again, their use of the word “learn” suggests both the end of a process and a positive outcome, therefore it is possible that important information was not included in the study, as previously explained. On the other hand, Farber (1983), who investigated the effects of psychotherapeutic practice on psychotherapists through interviews and rating scale measures, asked participants about change rather than learning and found that negative experiences facilitated personal development. Therefore further research is needed on experience to provide more detailed and reliable information on the facilitation of personal and professional development through client work.

1.8 Summary and Conclusions

Research on the relationship between personal development, professional development and client work has generally found that trainee and professional counsellors experience client work as an important factor in their personal and professional development, with trainees and qualified counsellors experiencing common affects such as increased self-esteem, increased individuality and improved technical skills. However, there is a lack of information about what experiences within therapy facilitate development and how and why their development occurs. Researchers and theorists have consistently found and suggested that personal and professional development are complex processes to define, facilitate and assess and these difficulties may be the cause of a lack of a rationale for personal development activities in training courses (as found by Moller, Alilovic & Mundra, 2008) and confusion in trainees regarding the methods by which their personal development will be assessed (e.g. Donati, 2002). This research therefore aims to gain a greater understanding of how and why development occurs to enhance trainers’ understanding of the diverse development needs of trainees in order to contribute to an evidence base that would strengthen the rationales of trainers’ personal development curricula and clarify some of the confusion in this research area.

As well as finding a lack of information on how and why personal and professional development are facilitated by client work, the literature review also found that methodological issues may have influenced responses in the existing qualitative research, as interview questions focused on learning and may have led participants to

answer positively. Furthermore, previous researchers did not discuss how they managed the possibility that trainees may have been reluctant to discuss negative experiences of counselling as they may feel it is inappropriate to discuss challenges with clients in a research context (McLeod, 1990) and trainees may not want to admit negative feelings towards a training that they have significantly invested in, both emotionally and financially (Moller & Rance, 2013). This research aims to resolve these issues by asking participants broad questions about their “experience” in order to provide more balanced accounts of personal and professional development by allowing participants to discuss the topic in a way that is meaningful to them. This research will explicitly invite participants to discuss negative experiences of client work in order to normalise negative experiences and encourage discussion on this. Reflexivity on this subject is also presented (see Reflexive Statement) so that the reader is aware of the effect of potential process issues on the data. Gaining a greater understanding of trainees’ experience would strengthen the validity of the study and again enhance trainers’ understanding of trainees’ development needs and personal development training methods.

Alongside a lack of understanding of trainees’ experience of client work and methodological issues with the existing research, the literature review found that researchers did not sufficiently consider existing theories of personal and professional development when designing their studies and analysing their results. For example, Stahl et al.’s (2009) participants may have experienced difficulties in discussing their professional development because trainees at the beginning of training are theorised to be in the early stage of professional individuation (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992) when discussing the personal and professional aspects of their professional identity is theorised to be especially challenging. Theories of professional development (e.g. Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1993) suggest that, although there is variability and that personal and professional development is influenced by diverse factors, trainees who are in the year before qualifying tend to be more able to discuss their development than less experienced trainees, and they are also the most in need of support as it tends to be the “most intense” period of training (p. 42). Furthermore, existing research has not provided definitions for personal and professional development and as such it is difficult to ascertain what specific processes are being investigated. This research aims to provide quality data on the relationship between personal and professional

development and client work by researching final year trainees' experience. Trainees will be asked to define personal and professional development so that results can be interpreted within the lens of their experience, in line with the pluralistic stance of this research. Information on trainees' definitions of personal and professional development and their ability to discuss their development will be discussed in relation to existing theories after the analysis, which will contribute to academic knowledge on the wider topic and discussion of personal and professional development.

1.9 Research Question

How do final year Counselling Psychology trainees experience the relationship between working with clients and their personal and professional development?

Methodology

2.1 Methodology, Method and Rationale

The aim of this research is to understand trainees' experience of the relationship between their client work and their personal and professional development. The findings of the Literature Review suggest that trainees have diverse needs and experiences of personal and professional development (e.g. Galbraith & Hart, 2007); therefore it was essential that these diverse needs and experiences could be represented in the results. Qualitative methodologies were deemed more suitable in answering the research question than quantitative methodologies as the former usually focus on a small number of participants and address complex questions of how and why trainees experience their development in a particular way, whereas the latter usually focus on a larger sample and are concerned with assessing whether development was experienced in a particular way. As such, it is suggested that quantitative methodologies cannot capture the complexity of personal and professional development, and that qualitative methodologies are best placed for understanding the complexities of this research area, a view which is shared by authors of personal and professional development research (e.g. Marcan & Sharipo, 1998; Rizq, 2010).

As this research focuses on lived experiences of personal and professional development and is concerned with the complexity of similarities and differences between participants' experience, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was selected as the method of analysis. According to Smith and Osborn (2004), the use of IPA is "particularly suitable where the topic under investigation is novel or under-researched, where the issues are complex or ambiguous and where one is concerned to learn something about process and change" (p. 211). This corresponds with this research, which is about the process of personal and professional development as facilitated through the under-researched area of client work.

IPA was viewed as a more appropriate method for this research than Grounded Theory, which is described as the main alternative method to IPA (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009), as Grounded Theory is concerned with constructing theories and

models from its results. This research was interested in representing the complexities of individual similarities and differences of personal and professional development, rather than aiming to build a cohesive and generalised model of development that could be applied to the whole sample and other populations (Willig, 2001).

2.2 Overview of IPA and Philosophical and Epistemological Underpinnings

IPA is a qualitative method of analysis that was first developed by Smith (1996) to enable researchers to capture experience systematically. Smith et al. (2009) explain that IPA has been developed and informed by three key areas of the philosophy of knowledge: phenomenology, ideography and hermeneutics. Phenomenology is the philosophical study of experience. Husserl was the first philosopher whose work in phenomenology was influential in the development of Smith's (1996) IPA. His interests in phenomenology focused on the examination individuals' perceptions of their experiences. In response to Husserl's ideas, Heidegger suggested that individuals are immersed within a number of different contexts that influence experience, such as culture, language, relationships and politics. The evolution of Husserl's idea that a person experiences the world as it is, to Heidegger's idea that a person experiences a perception of the world that is influenced by their immersion in contexts, is the philosophical underpinning for the interpretive element of IPA. The phenomenological aim of IPA research is to present participants' experience of a particular phenomenon, but given the idea that individuals experience is influenced by their context, the researcher must interpret the participant's world (Larkin et al., 2006).

Heidegger's suggestion that meaning must be understood in context is the second main philosophical underpinning of IPA: Hermeneutics, which is the theory of interpretation. Heidegger posited that phenomenology should involve a hermeneutic process. Central to hermeneutic theory is the idea of the hermeneutic circle, which focuses on the dynamic and interconnected relationship between the part and the whole on a number of levels. According to Hermeneutic theory, the researcher is part of the context in which meaning is produced. Therefore IPA research involves a "double hermeneutic", whereby the researcher aims to make sense of how the participant makes sense of their experience (Larkin et al., 2006). The researcher's

orientation towards the research question is therefore open and process oriented (Shinebourne, 2011). This allows researchers to make cautious interpretations about the meaning of the conversational, emotional and cognitive phenomena found in participants' narratives (Larkin et al., 2006).

Ideography is the third main theoretical influence on IPA theory. Ideography is the study of the particular. The focus on the particular operates on two dimensions within IPA: firstly, IPA draws upon individual accounts of a specific phenomenon within specific contexts and secondly, IPA is committed to a thorough and deep analysis of the data collected (Smith, 2004).

The role of the IPA researcher is close to my own epistemological belief that experience is influenced by a number of contexts and must be understood through an intersubjective meaning making process. The aims of IPA also correspond to the philosophical perspective of Counselling Psychology, which states that Counselling Psychologists have a commitment to engage with subjectivity and intersubjectivity, and to respect the validity of first-person accounts (BPS, 2005).

IPA is concerned with achieving a detailed and nuanced analysis of the lived experience of a small number of participants. As such, caution is made when making assumptions about the wider populations (Smith, 2004). The subjective and intersubjective elements of the double hermeneutic process are discussed further in the Reflexive Statement.

2.2.1 The relationship between IPA and the employed model of self.

Although the definition of the "self" provided in the literature review is theoretically pluralistic rather than phenomenological, hermeneutic and ideographic (see 1.4.2 Defining the self), the pluralistic position of this research is consistent with the philosophical base of IPA as research that is theoretically pluralistic allows participants to discuss the self in a way that is meaningful to them, according to their context. However, phenomenological research is the study of "lived" and "intentional" experience (Husserl, 1982 [1913]) therefore IPA cannot interpret

unconscious meanings, experiences and relationships that the participant may hold in relation to the self and their experience of client work.

2.3 Procedures

2.3.1 Research design.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six participants face-to-face, and transcribed and analysed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith 2009).

2.3.2 Sampling and participants.

Smith and Eatough (2006) suggest that IPA sample sizes should be small so that each participant's account can contribute to the analysis, and the sample should be homogenous so that the group's perspective of the phenomenon investigated can be understood by the researcher (Smith & Osborn, 2004). A homogenous sample of six to eight participants is suggested for doctoral IPA research Smith et al., (2009). Six participants were recruited for this research.

To ensure sample homogeneity, members of the sample must share common characteristics. While IPA's epistemological stance is that results cannot be generalised to the wider population, maximal homogeneity ensures the findings' utility in providing useful insights for other groups and contexts similar to the one examined (Johnson, 1997; Yardley, 2008). In order to meet the homogeneity requirements of the method, inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. Final year Counselling Psychology trainees who were enrolled on HCPC accredited doctoral programmes were included; and students from London Metropolitan University were excluded. Final year students on university doctoral programmes were selected as the research sample and recruited as theories of personal development (e.g. Ronnestad & Skovholt, 1993), suggest that although there is variability, personal and professional development are influenced by diverse factors, trainees who are in the year before qualifying tend to be more able to discuss their development than less experienced trainees, and they are also in most need of support as it tends to be the "most intense"

(p. 42) period of training. A trainee sample was selected in order to generate further knowledge about trainees' needs so that personal and professional development training can be enhanced as research has found that activities that are mandatory on all/some Counselling Psychology programmes to facilitate personal and professional development (e.g. personal therapy, personal development groups and reflective journals) have not been received positively by all trainees. Students from non-HCPC accredited courses were excluded as such courses may have had significantly different experiences of personal and professional development in training as they are not required to follow practice guidelines. While accredited Counselling Psychology programmes differ in their training methods and emphases, all accredited courses must display their commitment to the same personal development training criteria.

Counselling Psychology programmes differ in length due to a full-time, part-time or mixed training structure. Research has found (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1993) that trainees generally experience similar challenges of training at specific training stages, regardless of length of training, therefore final year trainees were selected rather than a particular training year as homogeneity of training stage was assumed. The criteria for final year trainees was defined as including trainees ranging from those who had passed their penultimate training year to those who had completed their final year but had not yet qualified.

Students from London Metropolitan University were excluded from the research as I am a student at the university and there was a potential ethical risk that either/both participant and researcher could feel uncomfortable about entering into a researcher/participant relationship with a fellow student, which in turn could inhibit the process of the interview and analytic procedure.

No further inclusion/exclusion criteria were applied to the sample regarding participant demographics as the aims of this research were to gain an initial understanding of a selection of trainees' experience of the facilitation of personal and professional development through client work rather than to focus on particular demographics such as age and gender.

2.3.3 Participant profile.

The research sample consisted of two men aged 33-39 (mean age 36) and four women aged 26-45 (mean age 31.25). Two participants identified as White Irish, one as White British, one as Jewish European, one as South Korean and one as British Asian. Four were in their third year of full-time training and two in their fourth year of part-time training. Participant pseudonyms were chosen to reflect the cultures/nationalities of the individual participants.

Despite the decision not to recruit participants based on demographics such as gender, age or ethnicity, descriptive demographic information is provided to describe the participant profile for those who wish to conduct future research on the experiences of participants in terms of demographic grouping. For example, previous research (e.g. Kumary & Baker, 2008) has found that there were differences in stress levels between trainees based on their gender and age, with female participants and younger participants reporting higher stress ratings.

2.3.4 Materials and procedures.

For the first recruitment phase, emails (see Appendix A) were sent to the course leaders of London-based Counselling Psychology programmes, outlining the purpose of the research and requesting that an invitation to participate (see Appendix B), brief (see Appendix C) and consent form (see Appendix D) be circulated to final year Counselling Psychology trainees. London-based trainees were recruited in the first phase to determine whether all participants could be recruited from the same city, which would have achieved greater sample homogeneity and allowed participants to be interviewed quickly, as I also live in London. In the second recruitment phase, emails were sent to all other Counselling Psychology programmes in the UK. In the third recruitment phase, a post was made on the “Counselling Psychologists UK” page on Facebook that outlined information about the research and asked potential participants to email me if they would like to participate.

This research followed the guidelines by Smith et al. (2009) who recommend using an interview schedule for semi-structured interviews in order to enable a priori

reflections on the expected content of the topic area and potential difficulties of during the interview. Although an interview schedule was created, the aim of an IPA interview is “largely to facilitate an interaction which permits participants to tell their own stories, in their own words” (Smith et al., 2009 p. 57), therefore the schedule was used as a prompt rather than an agenda to be stuck to so that participants could respond in a way that was meaningful to them.

When creating the interview schedule (see Appendix E), I followed the guidelines set by Smith, Flowers & Larkin, (2009), who recommend six to ten open questions to usually occupy 45-90 minutes of conversation. The interview schedule consisted of eight questions with corresponding prompts. The questions were derived from gaps and findings in the existing literature³ and ordered according to the process of “funneling” (Smith and Osborn, 2008), whereby beginning questions were broad and general and became increasingly particular and specific as the interview progressed. Smith et al. (2009) suggest that this process eases participants into the interview topic so that they are relaxed by the time they come to discuss more complex material.

A pilot study was conducted with one participant to assess the effectiveness of the interview schedule in stimulating a rich discussion of the research topic and for the researcher to practice conducting a research interview. The aims of the Interview Schedule were achieved but the data from this study was not incorporated into the results as the pilot was conducted on a student from London Metropolitan University and therefore did not meet the inclusion/exclusion criteria.

Participants were met at a location that was convenient to them. This decision was made as Smith et al., (2009) suggest that a location that is comfortable and familiar to the participant is preferable, in order to put the participant at ease so they are more likely to respond authentically. Furthermore, in order that no financial cost was incurred by participants as a result of their participation, participants were asked to select a suitable location for the interview. Four participants chose to meet at their Universities, where a room was booked for the interview to take place. One participant chose to conduct the interview at their home and one participant chose to

³ Please see Appendix F, where rationales for each interview question are provided.

participate at a quiet café. I agreed to meet the participants in these chosen locations but gave information of my location to others in order to minimise risk.

At the start of the interview, participants were asked to read the brief, and any questions about the interview procedure were answered. Participants were reminded that there would be an opportunity to ask further questions about the research in the debriefing session after the interview. Participants were asked to read and sign the consent form if they agreed to the terms of participation outlined. Participants were then allocated an ID number and asked if they had any further questions before participating. The interview was then conducted (lasting approximately 80 minutes) and audio recorded. The participant was thanked for their participation and any questions they had about the study were answered. Participants were asked to read and keep the debrief (see Appendix G) so that they had my contact details if they decided they would like to withdraw their data. A deadline for withdrawal was set at one month to allow participants a significant amount of time for their data to be withdrawn before the commencement of the analytic procedure.

2.3.5 Ethical considerations.

This research aimed to ensure the welfare and protection of participants at each stage of the research process. This research was granted ethical approval from London Metropolitan University's research ethics review panel.

The voluntary nature of the study was made explicit by informing participants verbally and via the brief, consent form and debrief of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence or prejudice to them. Participants were informed in the consent form that the interview data were strictly confidential and that they would not be identifiable in any report of the study. The consent form however stipulated that confidentiality would be broken if participants expressed significant and immediate risk to themselves or others, in line with BPS (2008) practice guidelines and HCPC (2012) confidentiality guidelines.

In order to ensure participant confidentiality and to follow ethical procedures of data handling, the data were stored, managed, archived and disposed of in the following

four ways. Firstly, each participant was allotted a personal ID number at the interview. The ID number was known only by the researcher, allowing no links to be made between anonymised interview data and the non-anonymised consent form. The record of the participant name and corresponding ID number were stored separately to the rest of the data in a safe to ensure confidentiality. Secondly, all audio files were password protected, (in compliance with the Data Protection Act, 1998) and given ID numbers. Thirdly, participants were asked to email me if they wished their data to be withdrawn. Although no participants asked for their data to be withdrawn, the plan for data withdrawal was that the record of participant name and corresponding ID number would be used to locate and delete the relevant file. Finally, all audio files were password protected and stored on my password protected personal computer until the audio data had been transcribed. The transcriptions were allotted their corresponding ID number and the audio files were deleted after analysis. The transcripts are kept in a safe and will be destroyed after the completion of this thesis and possible further publications, when it is ensured the data will not be needed for further analysis (in compliance with Data Protection Legislation that data should not be kept longer than they are needed).

2.3.6 Analytic procedure.

The results for this research were analysed according to the guidelines suggested by Smith et al., (2009). All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Smith and Osborn (2008) suggest that all spoken words should be transcribed, as well as other features of the participant's talk, such as significant pauses, laughs and false starts. See Appendix H for evidence of this transcription method. Each transcript of audio recording was analysed in turn. The first transcript was listened to and read several times during and after the transcription process. Descriptive comments, such as key events and experiences described by the participants; linguistic comments which focused on specific language used by the participant; and conceptual comments, which focused on the researcher's own thoughts about the participant's talk and interrogated the data at a more conceptual level, were derived from the data and written in the left hand margin. These initial notes were used to inform a greater level of interpretation of the raw data and emergent themes were identified and written in the right hand margin that aimed to simultaneously reduce the data set while

maintaining the complexity of the initial notes (see Appendix H). The raw data were also used to ensure that interpretations represented the intersubjective process of sense-making between participant and researcher. Once all emergent themes were identified, emergent themes were written chronologically so that connections between the emergent themes could be made and emergent themes could be organised into clusters. The clusters of emergent themes were scrutinised against the text so that all connections related to associations in the text. Emergent themes that were not supported with textual evidence were dropped. Clusters were given a preliminary label, which was representative of the cluster's collective meaning. The emergent themes were presented in a table. Once the analysis of the first transcript was completed, the other transcripts were read several times, coded, themed and clustered in the same way as summarised above. Emergent themes were compared cross-transcripts and subordinate themes were generated from the emergent themes and organised into clusters. Superordinate themes were then generated which represented the meanings of clusters of subordinate themes found between transcripts.

The analytic process presented above is linear, however, IPA is an iterative process, where the researcher moves back and forth throughout the different analytic stages during the analytic procedure (Smith et al., 2009). Although common superordinate themes were found between transcripts in this research, themes were interconnected. As a result, themes were rearranged and changed during the write-up phase to ensure the data was organised in a way that represented its complexity, rather than arranging data in a way that was clearer but was not representative of participants' experience.

The findings of the research are presented in the Results chapter. Existing theoretical models and research are then used to explain, describe and discuss the participants' experience in a way that goes beyond the participants' and the researcher's own sense making (Smith, et al., 2009) in the Discussion chapter.

2.3.7 Maintaining and evidencing the quality of the analysis.

There has been much debate as to whether and how the reliability and validity of qualitative research can be assessed and ensured (Hammersley, 2007; Mays, 2000). Questions have focused on whether it is possible to apply a reliability and validity criteria for all research or whether there should be a different set of requirements for qualitative and quantitative research; whether reliability and validity must be assessed by an “expert” in the field; when in the research process validity should be assessed; and whether it is possible to create a criteria by which the reliability and validity of a piece of research can be assessed (e.g. Hammersley, 2007; Morrow, 2005; Rolfe, 2006). In response to these questions, Smith (2011) suggests that although whether a piece of research passes a set of guidelines is subjective, guidelines that focus on checking the reliability and validity of specific research methods would allow a more reliable and valid judgment of quality to be made, as assessment would support the method’s epistemology.

The quality of this research was maintained by following Smith’s (2011) “quality evaluation guide” for IPA. Throughout the process of the research, I aimed to ensure that the research was of an acceptable standard by following Smith’s (2011) four criteria as described and evidenced as follows: Firstly, Smith (2011) suggests that the research must be phenomenological, hermeneutic and ideographic, in line with the method’s theoretical principles. The focus on the meaning of trainee Counselling Psychologists’ experience in this research, the importance of context and the researcher’s interpretations in the analysis, and the interest in representing trainees’ differing positions and experiences of personal and professional development evidences the quality of the research. Secondly, Smith suggests that the method is transparent so that the reader can see how the method was undertaken. The analytic procedure that was undertaken in this research is provided (see Method 2.3.6) and in the Analysis chapter a clear distinction is made between descriptive and interpretive comments. Thirdly, Smith (2011) states that the research must be coherent, plausible and interesting. The content of the data was detailed and complex. Great care was taken to ensure that the themes were organised in a way that represented their complexity (and value) while remaining easy to follow for the reader. Finally, Smith (2011) states that for IPA research with six participants, there should be extracts from

at least three participants per theme in order to ensure sufficient evidence for the theme across the sample. The themes in this research contain extracts from a minimum of four participants, with four out of six themes containing extracts from all six participants, demonstrating the validity and quality of the analysis.

Analysis

3.1 Overview

Smith (2004) suggests that IPA consists of three analytic levels: a phenomenological level, which focuses on a description of participants' talk; an analytical level, where the researcher presents their thoughts about participants' talk; and a theoretical level, which analyses the findings of the analysis in relation to other literature. The first two analytical levels are presented in this chapter. The theoretical level will form the content of the discussion chapter.

Table 1: Superordinate and Subordinate Themes

Overarching theme: Split v Overlap

Superordinate theme 1: **Theoretical**

Superordinate theme 2: **Technical**

Theory v Meaning

Difficulties in Early Training

Active v Unconscious

Facilitation of Development

Personal Development and the Training Course

The New Self

The analysis reflects participants' experience of their personal and professional development in Counselling Psychology training on two different dimensions, which are presented as superordinate themes (see Table 1); a Theoretical dimension and a Technical dimension. Within each dimension are subordinate themes that demonstrate the confusion and complexity that characterise how participants' personal and professional development was experienced. Superordinate themes are related by an overarching theme of Split v Overlap; the superordinate and subordinate themes reciprocally influence, yet are separate from each other, with both containing strong emotional elements, as explored in the analysis. The analysis begins with the Theoretical superordinate theme, which provides the conceptual and psychological framework by which the Technical superordinate theme, which analyses trainees' experiences of the process of their development, is understood and experienced.

3.2 Theoretical

This superordinate theme explores the relationship between participants' understanding of personal and professional development theory and their lived experience of development itself.

3.2.1 Theory v meaning.

Participants gave very similar definitions for personal development and professional development. Personal development was broadly defined as relating to the therapist's personal qualities self and the overcoming of personal difficulties, while professional development was broadly defined as relating to the therapist's knowledge and the learning of technical skills, as demonstrated below by Holly and Sameera:

H: Professional development is about knowledge...personal development um...it's about knowing yourself better...it's about who you are as a person, how that influences on you as a practitioner.

S: The struggles that I had before and how I've moved on and grown from them perhaps um I think about that in terms of personal development and with professional development I suppose in terms of my client group that I work with and maybe the complexity of clients um my knowledge and understanding.

Although all participants gave similar definitions for personal development and professional development, all participants voiced that personal development and professional development were interrelated processes, with some reporting that that the concepts overlapped and others experiencing them as the same process in practice:

Ch: Professional development and personal development for me are sort of two overlapping circles

A: How can they be separate?

L: Professional development is personal development, definitely.

Throughout this chapter, the concepts “personal development” and “professional development” are defined according to the broad definitions given by participants as set out above, i.e. that professional development relates to the acquisition of skills and knowledge, while personal development relates to building awareness of the self of the counsellor and utilising the self within the therapeutic relationship. Professional development and personal development are defined as being conceptually distinct but overlapping in practice.

Despite similar definitions of the meaning and process of the concepts, participants differed in the way in which the concepts were experienced in practice and the way that participants felt about the concepts themselves. The similarities between participants’ “theoretical” definitions allows the inference that trainees are aware of common theoretical definitions and discourses about personal and professional development.

Some participants, such as Chun and Connor, voiced that although personal development impacted on their professional development, they wanted to keep aspects of their personal development for themselves. The impact of this on the facilitation of development will be further explored further in the Technical superordinate theme section. However, the resistance displayed by Chun below can also be interpreted as her opposing an implied theory about the function and role of personal development, as implied by participants’ differing responses to theoretical definitions and personal experiences of personal and professional development in the interview:

Ch: I don’t want my entire personal development just for my professional development so that’s why I’ve got my own separate stuff [...] I don’t really want to use training as an excuse to develop personally, this would be going on regardless.

In Chun’s talk above, she speaks defensively about her preference to take ownership of some of her personal development, while also anxiously defending the personal benefit of her personal development because developing herself was something that she wanted to pursue aside from training. There appears to be fear that work on

herself for herself would or should be subsumed under the objective of improving her therapeutic work with clients, as this could mean that the benefits she has gained as a result of personal development overstep professional boundaries.

Anxiety was prevalent within participants' talk. This too can be interpreted as relating to the idea that participants believe there is a "correct" way to develop. Anxiety is interpreted as relating to an interaction between an implied discourse of there being a correct way to develop and participants' psychological experience and process of development, as explored further in the Technical superordinate theme.

Anxiety about how trainees fit with theories of development is also apparent in Holly's talk, when she anxiously asked me if her definition of professional development was satisfactory:

H: I think all the aspects of your professional role are your professional development um...yeah, so yeah...I think...yeah, is that all right?

Holly expressed confusion about the process of her personal and professional development throughout her interview, which may explain her uncertainty about the definition of concepts above. However, her anxiety about not having a clear definition and her questioning if the definitions she has given are "all right" can also be interpreted as relating to a belief that there is a correct way to develop and a fear that she is not developing as she should.

Contrary to Holly, Lachlan expressed formulated ideas about the concepts personal and professional development and the implications of enforcing theories of development onto trainees. Like other participants, Lachlan gave similar theoretical definitions for the concepts personal and professional development. However, rather than aiming to fit with definitions of personal and professional development, he expressed a dislike for the concepts personal and professional development, saying that the concepts were defined in the context of business, in which he believes there is a professional defensiveness that does not capture the richness and complexity of the process of development he has experienced in training:

L: Before I started Counselling Psychology I'd abhor words like personal development because somehow they're clichés and as with all clichés they become dead language.

Lachlan's conceptualisation of the concepts personal and professional development as "dead language" opposes his lived experience of the concepts as being alive; Lachlan warns that the use of such concepts could influence trainees to become defensive professionals, who do not use the self and are "dead" and ineffective in therapy:

L: our experience could be collapsed in one word, or could push us into ways of thinking that we might not want [...] Abiding by external rules and ethics and codes and things like that, they are important, but they're all to do with very you know very cognitive processes of being right and correct and I think that can be used as a defense against being a person.

Participants' differing responses to their similar definitions personal development and professional development suggest that, although personal and professional development can be broadly defined, the meaning of these concepts is different for different people. However, participants' strong emotional responses to the generalised definitions suggest that participants have derived implicit and unwelcome meanings from the generalised definitions about what development is like and who it should be for, which relate to their anxious and defensive responses.

3.2.2 Active v unconscious.

Although there were differences between participants' general definitions and experiences of personal and professional development as explored above, some participants' definitions were also affected by their experience of personal development as an unconscious process. For example, Connor also said that he preferred the term personal growth to personal development as he did not feel that changes that had occurred in him through training could be defined as personal development because he had not actively sought to develop:

Co: It's [personal development] probably distinct from the personal growth is maybe that it's a bit more active if that makes sense, it's almost like I'm taking steps to develop and maybe that's a slightly different to personal growth because it's maybe something that happens because of life experiences through the world and not something you deliberately seek to do.

Connor experienced personal and professional development as a process that is naturally occurring rather than one that is actively entered into. Participants displayed confusion when it came to discussing their developmental experiences. All participants said that they had not reflected on their personal/professional development prior to the interview, as demonstrated by Sameera, Lachlan and Chun:

S: it's been an eye opener um... I think maybe before um I think it's made me realise that I've grown quite a lot from where I first started to where I am now.

L: it was very interesting because it's a it's um I have never I've never really formulated my thoughts with another person

Ch: It's just brought it into sharper focus and that's a nice feeling to have rather than feeling that everything's just muddled and that's the way it is, yeah.

Although Connor described his development as naturally occurring, he expressed that describing and formulating ideas about his development in the interview was containing as it clarified his experience and brought his developmental process into consciousness. As a result of participating in the interview, Connor describes believing that he should be taking steps to develop:

Co: I'm probably more aware of that now actually having done the interview actually of being like oh that's what I've been doing actually oh ok, so I think that's been really interesting actually yeah, I probably wouldn't have just sat down and thought about that so much yeah, what does all that growth development stuff mean to me, do I have a plan for that? I don't think I have a plan for that maybe I'm thinking maybe I should now, maybe I should write some of that stuff down. Yeah so it's been good

actually, a bit challenging though as well to think jeez do I even know, I don't know better say something.

Connor's thought that he'd "better say something", his suggestion of taking steps to enhance his development and his use of words such as "should" can be interpreted as him fearing exposure by a critical other for not developing correctly. For Connor, the interview increased his anxiety associated with thoughts that he had not developed adequately or correctly, whereas for other participants it decreased anxiety through the realisation that they had developed.

3.3 Technical

Following on from participants' experience of personal and professional development as an organic, often unconscious process, participants had difficulty discussing the technicalities of how their personal and professional development were facilitated. Although the research question and interview schedule focused on the facilitation of personal and professional development through client work specifically, participants chose instead to discuss a number of different activities and events that had facilitated their personal and professional development. The analysis finds that participants experienced different activities and events as important to their personal and professional development, according to their own developmental needs and course of development. As the relationship between developmental facilitators is inextricably linked with the psychology of each participant over time, this superordinate theme explores these different elements together to provide a rich picture of trainees' experience of the process of development.

3.3.1 Difficulties in early training.

This subordinate theme explores trainees' experience of the relationship between the beginning of training and their emotional difficulties.

Most participants described the beginning of training as a confusing and distressing time. Participants attribute their distress to building awareness of their personal and professional shortcomings and having difficulties integrating personal and

professional aspects of themselves. Participants either focused on their personal or professional development, according to their perceived needs. The focus on either personal or professional development can also be interpreted as referring to participants' interests and personal philosophies.

Participants described that the personal and professional parts of the counsellor's self must be integrated to provide competent therapeutic practice. However, participants described difficulties in integrating the personal and professional aspects of their development at the beginning of training. As a result, some participants described primarily focusing on their personal development at the beginning of training, while others described primarily focusing on their professional development.

For Lachlan, Chun and Connor, who mostly discussed their personal development, the link between their personal and professional development was illustrated through a description of difficulties they had managing their own process, while also delivering therapeutic skills learned through training, in their work with clients. The beginning of training in particular is described as an overwhelming time; participants spoke of experiencing conflict, anxiety and feelings of guilt when working therapeutically as they had become increasingly aware of their own difficulties. Chun and Lachlan describe therapeutic training as overwhelmingly interacting with their own problems, affecting the way they felt about their therapeutic work:

Ch: It was a real sort of agony and there was a lot of guilt about not being cured or treated myself.

L: you get a combusive effect as a trainee or certainly I had of the superego as a vicious bastard as there saying, "you're destroying these people".

For Connor, the effects of personal development are destabilising for an identity he had formed pre-training:

Co: I feel a bit discombobulated you know, you're a bit kind of it's all stirred up a bit and maybe your sense of self is a bit maybe I felt I had a bit of certainty in terms of oh

this is my sense of me and this is what I'm about and that kind of thing and then actually hang on, what's going on here, what's this about?

Chun, Lachlan and Connor describe the painful and uncomfortable experience of early training. Lachlan's description of his superego attacking him and Connor's confusion of "what's going on here?" can be interpreted as a new self attacking and intruding on the old self, and/or the old self vigorously defending against the new one. Awareness of their own personal difficulties adds to Chun and Lachlan's pain during development; Chun fears that she is unfit to practice whereas Lachlan fears that his own problems will contaminate and destroy his clients.

Like Connor, Holly experienced development as uncomfortable for the self rather than affecting her therapeutic work with clients. Holly explains that having personal therapy highlighted problems that she was not previously aware of:

H: I was completely in denial of any issues that I had and I first went to therapy and er it was like the most overwhelming thing for me and I thought oh, god, I actually, I've got issues and it was really overwhelming and that was quite hard.

There is a sense that participants experience training as a rebirth; their sense of self and identity is questioned and altered. This may explain the raw emotional states experienced by participants above and participants' anxiety and defensiveness about developing or not developing "correctly".

Participants described difficulties in early training as having an impact on their work with clients. In line with participants' experience of personal and professional development as being part of the same process, professional development was experienced as contingent on personal development. Participants experienced confusion and emotional dysregulation as a result of an increased awareness of their own psychological problems through the practice of delivering therapy, making personal developmental experiences more salient for the majority of participants, as experienced by Chun:

Ch: During the second year what I noticed was my clinical skills had reached the ceiling in the therapy room so my idea of therapy being giving the client an experience and using my presence and my felt sense, I was hitting my ceiling of how comfortable I could be or um letting go of my own obstacles of needing to be liked, needing to be competent, needing to deal with that. So a lot of that personal stuff was getting in the way of becoming a better clinician.

Above, Chun talks about her need to integrate the personal and professional aspects of herself in therapy but voices how her personal self was less developed than her professional self. As the personal and professional are experienced as inextricably linked, Chun was obliged to work on her personal self in order to progress professionally. Chun's description of her personal self "getting in the way" of her professional work allows the interpretation that addressing personal difficulties is something that she feels she must do to progress professionally, rather than something she would choose to do otherwise. This could explain the "agony" associated with her personal development.

Anisha also described the importance of integrating the personal and professional into her work with clients. Contrary to Chun, Anisha expressed experiencing difficulties with her professional development rather than personal development at the beginning of training. Below, Anisha discusses her belief that her underdeveloped professional self must "catch up" with her developed personal self before she can integrate the two. Perhaps because of her focus on professional development, her talk is less emotionally charged than the clients who spoke of their personal development:

A: Forty-three years without practicing working with clients and therefore this kind of integration is something that's kind of still every now and again I'm kind of choking on and it's a bit clunky and in my private life I know very well who I am you know I'm I've passed my 20s and my 30s and motherhood and all my different parts are very talking to each other.

Anisha's experience of "choking" on the integration of her personal and professional selves can be interpreted as representing her difficulty in holding back her personal self when working professionally; not having experience and knowledge is difficult

for her to stomach. The difference between Anisha's supervisor and Anisha is also highlighted with metaphors of digestion; she must silence and monitor her developed personal self as her professional self is still being prepared:

A: I just thought, "you are a student, you are really young in this game, you cannot be as opinionated and as um... you know um...I'm not yet a cooked product if you know what I mean I really have to keep my generosity and I have to keep my horizons open" and I keep on having to remind myself that.

Anisha's belief that she is "young" in her professional life and needs to develop professionally before she can voice her opinions can be interpreted as relating to participants who experienced a loss of a sense of self through building awareness; although participants differ in their focus of developing the personal or the professional, participants are unified in that they all must adopt and grow into new personal or professional selves and roles in order to progress personally and professionally and become better students and practitioners.

Like Anisha, Sameera also focused primarily on professional development at the beginning of training. The majority of participants focused on the type of development (personal or professional) that they most needed to work on. However, Sameera discusses focusing on the professional to avoid the personal:

S: I was quite avoidant of emotions and then I realised the impact that that had on my clinical work and I've been able to work on, work through that now.

Sameera's experience suggests that although trainees may have preferences to work on a particular aspect of the self or development, this might not always be productive in facilitating personal and professional development.

Participants' experience of early training as an overwhelming time where their identities are challenged and being formed can also be interpreted as reflecting participants' anxiety about the process of their development in relation to theory as explored in the Theoretical superordinate theme: they must meet the demands of training in order to progress in work and life.

3.3.2 Facilitation of development.

Participants reported many important activities and events as important to their personal and professional development. These include client work; personal therapy; supervision; relationships with course colleagues; reading; learning different therapeutic models and approaches; and life experiences. This subordinate theme explores participants' experience of the relationship between these activities and their personal and professional development.

Participants' difficulty reporting solely in relation to the facilitation of personal and professional development through client work reflects the importance of the combination of many different developmental facilitators to their development. However, participants did generally report using activities and events for different stages of development, such as gaining awareness, working on difficulties and implementing development. The analysis finds that, while participants did voice some activities as more influential than others, their development is facilitated by the significance of the experience of what is brought up by the activity or event, and participant's individual preferences for the activity or event, rather than the activity or event itself.

For example, Connor disclosed that he believed he needed "permission" to ask for help and his difficulty in expressing his needs and emotions to others at the beginning of training. This was identified and worked on in a number of different activities, events and situations in training. Below, Connor describes gaining awareness of this default position through reflecting on the purpose of supervision:

Co: I'd try to figure out my own way to do things and sort of recognising um that I was sort of doing that in a professional capacity as well in terms of going "well I probably could go to my supervisor with this, but no I'll probably figure it out for myself." So that kind of thing and actually recognising hang on you know they're there to supervise you you know that's like a space you have and so I think that was interesting for me, that kind of recognition that that I wasn't really doing that much in a professional capacity or in a personal kind of a capacity and just recognising, jeez you know, why not?

Connor described gaining awareness of personal difficulties and an increased ability to express emotions through vicarious learning from observing clients and colleagues, as demonstrated through his reflection of working with a client below:

Co: It's amazing how this person just met me and they can be very kind of open and talk about very kind of personal stuff and be very kind of vulnerable to someone they've just kind of met, you know. And I thought I was kind of getting something from that as well, actually going is it almost can I give myself permission then to be able to go and do that as well.

Connor describes personal therapy as the arena where he can process what he has learned through these other activities:

Co: Personal therapy's really been that's really given me almost permission I think to think about what's been going on for me.

From learning externally, Connor was able to change internally. As a result of his development, Connor is able to be less of a "doer" in his therapeutic work, leading to positive outcomes:

Co: I sat with a client that was just incredibly shy and just could hardly speak at all, could hardly hear them, and so sometimes I just sat there and didn't really say anything you know, whereas before you know I was like the more active I was being the more he would withdraw because he was so kind of shy and afraid that I think actually I just sort of sat back then and did something different and the more I sat back, the more he came out of his shell actually so I think that was a big one for me.

Connor's above example illustrates that development is facilitated idiosyncratically by a number of activities and events rather than by just one. The significance of the experience rather than the activity itself facilitates development, although individual participants experience certain activities more preferably than others.

Connor's experience of development being facilitated by a chain of events and activities is experienced by other trainees. Like Connor, Lachlan became more aware of his default mode of experiencing and responding to others through working with clients, with personal therapy and supervision being the arenas in which this new insight about the self was examined and processed. This is illustrated in the quote below, where Lachlan describes his response to a situation that occurred in therapy where his client broke a bracelet given to him by his estranged father:

L: From my own personal perspective I thought that you know that this was a negative thing for the bracelet to break, that it was breaking connections and stuff but actually I was looking at it through the lens of my relationship with my own father [...] it was through supervision actually that I saw this but he possibly wanted to break through and it was a relief for him it's it's like my experience allowed me to maybe think one thing but then also to rethink it in that I also was in therapy thinking about it.

Anisha experienced personal therapy as a space where awareness of difficulties was also achieved, as illustrated in Anisha's quote below:

A: the combination of learning about therapy and doing therapy simultaneously is a very powerful thing and that elevated my awareness.

Anisha again highlights the importance of a combination of different activities in the facilitation of development. Chun shares a similar experience below and again voices her experience of personal therapy as being an important space for processing all of her learning in training:

Ch: the professional domain provides a lot of food for my own personal development um in terms of how I relate to authority figures or classmates or in relation to what certain clients trigger in me. Sometimes it doesn't always get covered in supervision so then I will take what's sort of trickled and left over to personal therapy. Um I think a lot of my relationship with supervisors and tutors and classmates sometimes gets taken to personal therapy as well and that gets looked at and with that awareness I might alter the way I am in those places. I guess it's an endless cycle.

Holly exemplifies the confusion associated with the facilitation of development by changing her mind throughout the interview about which activity was most influential to her personal and professional development.

H: I think thinking about it, that is, it's doing the therapy, it's the practice itself that's the biggest thing. I know I said supervisors and personal therapy but that is...it's doing the therapy is the thing that makes me develop the most.

Although participants identify a number of activities as facilitative of their personal and professional development in training, some trainees identified a preference for a particular activity, as exemplified in Lachlan's quote below:

L: It's very simple for me what personal development is within the context of this course, Counselling Psychology, it's therapy. Um so I go to therapy four times a week and it's analytic therapy and it's I've been doing it for four years so it's err it's just become a very big part of my life.

Despite participants' preferences for developmental activities, Holly highlights the importance of the experience of supervision as being facilitative of development rather than supervision having a facilitative effect itself:

H: I've had some supervisors that have been really unhelpful and I've learned nothing, well not nothing, but I've come out just feeling more confused I think about what I'm doing, and um I've had some supervisors that have been amazing, and it's those supervisors that have been, actually, as I'm saying this again it's supervisors I think that probably help with my professional development in terms of skills.

Sameera experienced having different supervisors as the most important activity for her development as she was able to adopt different therapeutic styles and find the one that was the best fit for her and her clients, supporting the interpretation of the importance of personal preference in personal and professional development.

S: I've had five supervisors now in the course and my training and I think the way they work differs a lot and really influences the way I work, they influence a lot of the

way that I work [...] (current supervisor) works with whatever the problem is and again whatever intervention is going to be helpful at the time for the client and I've found that really helpful I think I think that's what sits with me well as well and that's what I feel comfortable with in the way that I work.

Further to participants having preferences for particular activities and experiences, some participants experienced their personal characteristics as having a bearing on their personal and professional development. For example, Connor and Anisha reported a belief that age was a factor in their developmental stage and the facilitation of their personal and professional development. However, the importance of age for Anisha and Connor relates to their personal readiness for training.

Co: I think had I done it in my early twenties, well I wasn't that interested in it at the time so it's wasn't the sort of thing but if I had I don't think I would have got as much out of it I think yeah I think I could have done the academic side of it intellectually but I don't think I would have got as much to draw on anything for myself from working with people I think so that's another thing so as you as you just grow older you have more experiences that you can draw on and the more you can bring to the therapeutic space.

Sameera and Chun talk about development in relation to experience rather than age. They suggest that trainees become more competent in understanding their preferences for personal and professional development activities as training progresses, thus their methods for facilitating personal and professional development became increasingly individualised through the process of training.

S: Knowing where to take my own things [...] so it doesn't interfere with your clinical work.

Ch: Just as long yeah that you have that separate space to consolidate, sort of calibrate what's going on to you um so you are using your experience rather than having your experience and that's it, I think it does all come together.

3.3.3 Personal development and the training course.

While participants described learning where to take their developmental difficulties towards the end of training, and experiencing more clarity about the interpersonal process of therapy as training progressed, participants expressed difficulty talking about the process of their overall development throughout training. This suggests that participants do not actively engage in development, rather they experience it as a natural, unconscious process. The idea about the process of development coming increasingly into consciousness through the process of development is exemplified in the below quote by Holly:

H: There will always be those things that come up and it's an ongoing process and I think definitely one I'm more aware and I guess that fits with the unconscious, you're not really aware you might just avoid talking about something or exploring something with somebody because of your own stuff um but then you become aware of why you're doing that and I think having those kind of conversations in a training environment where you're constantly being made to think to reflect constantly about what you're doing and why you're doing it helps you to identify those why's and you then understand it and hopefully that helps your therapy.

Participants' use of different activities to understand personal problems in order to improve their clinical competence fits with their definition of personal development. However, participants' disclosure that they had not reflected on their personal and professional development prior to the interview, as explored in the active/unconscious subordinate theme could explain why participants view their personal development as an unconscious organic process.

Perhaps related to participants' lack of active focus on personal and professional development, some trainees said that they had minimal input from their training course in terms of their personal development as illustrated in Sameera and Connor's quotes below:

S: There's not been much of a focus on personal development on the course, there's a lot of emphasis on how that's really important and for you to use the space for therapy

to do that but there's not been much kind of time or anything that we've done on the course that's been about us developing personally.

Co: the responsibility's been put more on us to do that you know do you have you know maybe having your own journal or your own diary or that kind of stuff.

Sameera's experience that trainers stress the importance of personal and professional development and Connor's uncertainty about personal and professional training methods and expectations, as inferred by his description of personal and professional development activities as "kind of stuff" suggest that while trainees are aware of the importance of facilitating personal and professional development, there is little discussion in training of what personal and professional development are and how they can be facilitated.

Although participants were unsure as to how personal development was facilitated in training, participants differed in their beliefs as to how responsible their university should be in aiding them in their personal development. For example, Sameera and Holly did not feel comfortable discussing her personal difficulties in the university setting and reported using other spaces to process their development. As such, Holly did not express that her university should have responsibility for personal development:

H: whilst they're very approachable and nice (trainers) I don't want them to think I'm struggling.

Holly's fear of university tutors learning that she was struggling at times during the course can be interpreted as reflecting the anxiety expressed by trainees as a result of thinking that they are not developing as they think they should be and Sameera and Connor's experience that personal development was not discussed in training. Holly's position that personal development should not have a greater focus in training can therefore be interpreted as avoidance. As such, it is possible to argue that further guidance would be beneficial in facilitating her personal development.

In opposition to the interpretation that increased university input could help to reduce trainee anxiety, Chun expresses her belief that whatever was offered by universities would never be experienced as enough by some trainees and that increased input could increase anxiety:

Ch: Even though all those things that were offered were really useful, some people were just complaining that it was too much and they just weren't really in the space to absorb all that or take advantage of the tutor systems or whatever, some people were complaining that it was too little, um but that had more to do with their own levels of anxiety um in my opinion so even though you offer them a million more things it doesn't really help because the anxiety was coming from other things that they would need to have looked at. So I really do sympathise with the university institutions because they get a lot of grief no matter what they do.

The anxiety that Chun describes some trainees as having about not having more personal development input can also be interpreted as resulting from the destabilising effect of early training and trainees' fears that they are not developing as they should be. Chun expresses her belief that tutors can be the victims of blame from trainees as a result of trainees' difficulties in managing their own anxieties.

Anisha agrees that trainees expect too much from trainers. However, Anisha did not experience trainers at her university as helpful:

A: they're not very helpful. They're helpful in the sense that they teach us to the best of their ability, so they help our professional development to that extent, but I think they're doing their best to be really honest, because I was also a member of staff there while doing research and you know they're people coming to work in the morning, they're not gurus.

Anisha's comment that trainers are not "gurus" can be interpreted as representing her beliefs that other trainees view trainers as "all knowing" figures. This could relate to trainees anxiously both seeking and rejecting help, as the trainer is viewed as a powerful other who can reduce or expose trainees' difficulties.

Participants did identify training activities that related to their personal and professional development. However, there was confusion about the purpose of these activities, which may relate to Sameera's experience that there was not a focus on personal development in her training and Connor's confusion about personal development activities. The exchange with Holly below suggests that she was not consciously or explicitly aware of personal development activities in training and that for her engaging in them in the training context was not a priority:

RG: through the development process that you've described, what has the support been like on your course?

H: Yeah um... the support in any sense of support you mean or?

RG: I mean support though activities on your course but I'm interested in other forms of support if they come to mind too

H: Um I mean formally we have our personal tutors who are ready and able to talk about any issues really. And my personal tutor was completely approachable and really nice but I probably haven't used him as much as I probably should have and I'm thinking whether that's because whilst they're very approachable and nice I don't want them to think I'm struggling, and part of it is because I'm lazy and I don't want to come here and I think there have been times where I've thought I should go and see them but there's always been something else that has been more fun so I don't put it as a priority. Um and I think mostly actually the reason I don't see my formal support as a tutor is actually because the group the support that I get implicitly from my uni the cohort that I'm with is enough so yeah, they yeah they provide support of the same levels really so I don't feel that I need that formal support.

RG: Mmm. Is there anything else you do for personal development in training or anything else on offer other than personal tutors?

H: Umm I don't know um?

In keeping with participants' experience of developing according to idiosyncratic events and activities, participants experienced activities at university that can be interpreted as directly pertaining to personal development as being more or less helpful according to their developmental needs, theoretical orientations and personalities. Participants from different institutions reported their university's use of different personal development activities, including personal tutoring, peer supervision and experiential groups.

As suggested by Holly above, participants experienced personal tutoring in different ways. Below, Chun reports the importance of visiting her personal tutor in the facilitation of her personal development:

Ch: you sort of go in and you talk about all sorts of random things and because it's a meeting at school it's always coming back to how does this fare in your development as a clinician and your professional development um and it might be encouragement to look at certain types of placements, so I'll push myself in something that I know I need to push myself in, or it can be how to experiment or how to play with certain personal issues that I have in the university setting, where it's quite safe and it's ok to experiment.

Above, Chun explains that she uses personal tutoring to process her thoughts and views the university as a safe space to experiment with her difficulties. Like Chun, Holly described the benefits of talking through difficulties with others. Although Holly's above quotes demonstrate that she was not explicitly aware of engaging in personal development work at university, her description of activities that can be interpreted as pertaining to development suggest that, while her course aimed to facilitate development, this was not something that was successfully communicated by trainers or grasped by Holly. Regarding her opinions of these activities, Holly reported that the presence of a member of the team inhibited her from exploring her personal development needs when discussing the benefits of peer supervision:

H: There's something about being with peers and not having the lecturer there that you can just sort of you're less worried about what they're going to say really.

Although Holly and Chun report that tutorials can be used to discuss personal development issues, Connor reported that he did not have or was not aware of this resource, and suggests that development could be effectively facilitated through participating in tutorials:

Co: It might be quite nice if there was someone who was maybe kind of pushing you a little bit and just checking in with you, especially if it's more if the specific developmental goals, I think that would be good, because at the moment the responsibility's just on us to be doing that ourselves.

Connor's above quote suggests that, although participants were able to talk about training activities that related to their personal and professional development, these were not explicitly identified as personal development activities. This may explain why Holly did not express actively engaging in the activities for the facilitation of personal development.

It is possible to infer that Holly's worry about "what people will say" about her reporting difficulties in training relates to an interaction between her lack of explicit engagement in personal development work and her fear that she is not developing as she "should" be, as explored in the Technical superordinate theme. Although Holly's quote below exemplifies her belief that talking about her personal problems in training is "good in the long run", the distress that it causes questions how helpful this activity can be for her:

H: You have to talk about your own issues you know, especially in first year and I didn't like that, I found it a bit too intrusive. I felt quite exposed in front of people that I didn't know too soon and I don't think it was very helpful, I think I felt I think it was probably good in the long run, but we know each other so well and I think it's a good thing, and everyone's very accepting, but I do think sometimes I do get anxious sometimes about how much people know about how I feel about stuff.

Sameera shares Holly's experience of not wanting to share personal revelations with large groups of people:

S: When it came to sharing some kind of stuff, I think that I was quite kind of reluctant to do that um with the group you know and I think there were times when I really never felt comfortable doing that.

Lachlan, however, criticised aspects of his course that focused on personal and professional development that did not include experiential work:

L: I think that the emphasis is really skewed in terms of the way that the course is designed because you know I think I do have a problem with it but there are all these courses on negotiating a relationship which we had a module in, continuing personal and professional development which was a load of bollocks and we had guest lectures on expert witness on this and that, it was very piecemeal and we'd another one in the first year about it was basically how to keep your nose clean. And all of these things are necessary, I'm not saying they're not necessary in terms of regulations and all that stuff, but I'm saying that the emphasis is wrong, the emphasis is 40% on you know, being a professional and you wind up after three years saying yeah, I'm a professional, so what?

Lachlan's differing experience of engaging in explicit personal and professional development activities in training still can be interpreted as reflecting Holly's experience of not understanding the function of personal development activities in training, or perhaps not wanting or not being able to use them; although personal development activities and exercises exist in training, these are not successful in facilitating personal development for either Lachlan or Holly.

Most participants reported that their courses ran experiential days. Participants' experience of these days was varied. Lachlan reported experiencing the experiential days as very influential to his development and voiced his opinion that training should include more experiential work to make up for what he feels is a deficit in the number of required personal therapy hours:

L: Maybe because the the requirement of Counselling Psychology for so little therapy may be you know there should be a compensation for that in terms of getting people

to explore their feelings um more because I remember people crying in that session and breaking down and that's healthy.

Experiential activities, however, were not viewed as important to other participants' personal development. For example, Sameera and Holly's experiences of not wanting to share emotions allows the inference that they would not experience the strong emotions that Lachlan describes as being helpful in facilitating their development. Other participants, such as Chun, described a personal dislike for experiential days:

Ch: some of the group days can be really sort of clichéd and and just so artificial um so I think I'd rather that the school tried to focus on trying to calibrate our personal development into professional development so we have these sort of personal development days where we're supposed to do drawings and sort of talk about things and la la la all for our personal development, but it just doesn't, for me it was just sort of flat, and I would rather have those things separately within my space, and then school would offer a lot more professional development, ok how can you look at these things and how can you transfer it to your professional development? And that was sort of really useful in terms of the one to one tutorials that I have.

Other participants, such as Connor, presented a more open stance to personal development activities in training than the views expressed by Lachlan and Chun. His quote below reflects the interpretation that participants experience different activities as being facilitative of their personal development, in line with their personalities and personal preferences:

Co: we've done a few of those things and I think some people like it and I think others find it a bit cringy, [...] I don't know, we'll see how it goes.

3.3.4 The new self.

This subordinate theme explores the outcomes of participants' personal and professional development and the process of how development occurred.

The majority of participants compare their old therapeutic self with a new and improved therapeutic self, that is able to integrate the self and therapeutic skills into their work with more skill and less overwhelming emotion than at the beginning of training. This is shown in Lachlan's quote below, but is also demonstrated in a number of quotes in this theme.

L: When I started to work professionally, it sort of shone a light on those areas, very, very powerfully and it took a couple of years for them to become more present and it's only now, now I have the capacity perhaps as well as that it's out there presenting more, to deal with it.

Participants' comparisons of old and new selves can be interpreted as reflecting the confusing process of development and the challenge of understanding and reflecting on development as it occurs in early training, as exemplified when Chun talks about feeling "muddled" at the beginning of training:

Ch: I think...initially...initially it just all seemed a bit muddled what was going on, so personal therapy was a bit was just sort of inching towards a bit more self-awareness in the beginning, in terms of professional development it was more about feeling comfortable and feeling entitled to being there as a clinician, and client work was sort of actually I just don't know what I'm doing in the room um so initially I think the relationship between all of those was more about sort of containment and actually feeling a bit more self-belief. Now it just feels a bit more sophisticated in terms of I actually can see why I'm avoiding some interventions, or it's helping a lot more with my presence in the room and it's helping with not avoiding silences in the room and holding back um... so initially it was just sort of crude containment, just being with and now it's a bit more um sophisticated or maybe I'm just being a bit more aware of how the three are interacting whereas in the beginning I was just a bit too overwhelmed to know what was really going on.

Chun's description of the challenging experience of her early development reflects previously made interpretations of participants experiencing a link between anxiety and a loss of self in early training, which in turn interferes with client work. Chun's experience of "feeling entitled to be there" could relate to her increasing therapeutic

proficiency as she is able to integrate the personal and professional aspects of herself so that she can deliver therapeutic interventions while understanding and engaging in the therapeutic process.

Similar to Chun's experience of being able to attend to different processes and tasks simultaneously in therapy sessions, Lachlan talks about his development in relation to internal "freedom", suggesting that development reduces some of the challenging complexities and negative emotions associated with early training.

L: Every therapy session is like that is is you learn something new about yourself that hopefully will in my case I think I learn something new about myself that allows me um extra room and extra freedom inside myself.

Whereas Lachlan's quote above conceptualises development as constantly occurring in each personal therapy session, Connor expressed that there were "learning points" that facilitated his development, which were facilitated by experiences that built his awareness of his emotions, thoughts and behaviours.

Although Holly reports that she experienced personal and professional development through training, for her this is not a linear process. She experienced that her development was contingent on confidence:

H: When I feel confident that I'm progressing or developing personally and professionally, I feel that I am probably a better therapist because I feel more confident and less focused on myself. But there are other times when I feel that I don't know anything and I feel that I haven't changed anywhere from when I first started erm and so it's definitely it's not consistent.

While participants generally reported that challenges led to personal and professional development, some participants said that they sometimes chose not to address personal difficulties that they became aware of through the process of training. For Chun, the distress experienced as a result of becoming aware of personal difficulties is important in facilitating development as distress initiates change:

Ch: there's a point um where the distress just gets a bit too much and I not fully decide to let go or not fully decide to look at this so I can change it and become a better person, but it's kind of the level of intra psychic stress I'm feeling right now just becomes too much, and rather than avoiding it I'm going to look at it and that's the first step of increasing awareness and then um hopefully on the road to change um...although there's a few times that you do become aware of things and decide not to change it.

Most participants described an increasing ability to integrate both a boundary and overlap of their therapeutic self in in their clinical work as training progressed, and many also described becoming more accepting of their own limitations and uncertainties. Sameera and Chun both describe being able to be more boundaried with clients as a result of understanding their own issues. Where their emotional struggles at the beginning of training can be viewed as a response to a loss of identity, the process of development has enabled both Sameera and Chun to process their difficulties and become more emotionally robust as therapists as a result:

S: You might hear a lot of upsetting things and just being able to in terms of me developing personally not to be able to take that as you know, recognise that that's not my own and I may feel upset sometimes and just being able to recognise that that's not my own.

Ch: Because of that personal development, professionally I am able to maintain boundaries much more, I am able to say to clients things that are more confrontational, more direct, rather than being too sensitive of their feelings and being worried that they are not coming back to therapy.

Chun also said that the experience she gained working therapeutically alleviated some of her anxieties about not being qualified or suited to the profession:

Ch: I just felt that I was faking it a lot less. I think part of it is just because you rack up those hours and it's just a matter of gaining that experience.

Chun's experience of being an imposter at the beginning of training is shared with Connor, who reported that he adopted a façade when working therapeutically with clients at the beginning of training as a defense against his "discombobulated" self. The process of implementing skills and self-development allowed Connor to become comfortable in himself.

Co: it's probably just become, just becoming a bit more comfortable I think with it actually, um probably feeling like I can be a bit more like myself in a way instead of being a bit like I have to go into therapist mode now kind of thing, whatever that is and the there's probably something about that that there's some kind of armour or to create some kind of professional space or boundaries, some kind of thing that you'd almost hide behind a little bit. I think now that as I've developed a bit you can just kind of be more yourself in the room.

Participants' integration of their personal self into the therapeutic process is experienced as important to trainees; participants discussed the development of a new identity as a result of the training process. This was heavily associated with developing an orientation to practice:

S: The way I am personally I think that fits and that's what feels comfortable now ties with how I kind of deliver it [in] therapy, yeah. I feel that I'm reaching a point where everything just feels comfortable.

Participants experienced the ability to integrate the personal and professional aspects of themselves as relating to their increasing ability to implement boundaries in their work. Lachlan describes the complex relationship between the personal and professional overlap/boundary. For him, it is important to use the self in therapy but to also create a boundary to protect the therapist and client:

L: Between the actual boundary between the person and the work that the two can overlap and and run into each other but outside of that the er I think that there has to be a way of of yeah of keeping, of keeping them somehow distinct.

Anisha, however, views the personal and professional in the context of her spiritual beliefs as a Jewish Buddhist, which for her means that there is no boundary between personal and professional, self and other, rather, they must be integrated.

A: My personal development will include a higher level of integration of my different parts and simultaneously being able to stop seeing myself as separate to others.

Participants describe their experience that boundaries are important for their own and their clients' wellbeing. For example, Sameera talked about learning the importance of self-care and boundraying her clinical work to protect her self.

S: One of the things that I really used to do was to really kind of overwork and not take a break sometimes and actually that was quite unhelpful and just realising that, that it's ok to stop.

Holly spoke about understanding and accepting her limits and developmental stage as being an important outcome of her development:

H: I think it's about that you stop and you think more [...] for me it's it's more self awareness, self-awareness and feeling more comfortable with not always being able [...] It's about being aware but also feeling comfortable with that and I think the more you develop professionally, the more you feel comfortable with what stage you're at.

In line with the interpretation that development is facilitated by events that are significant to trainees' psychology, Connor perceived trainees to develop and struggle with their development at different times during training:

Co: We're all in different stages of it as well, like there are some people who kind of cruised though first year and now they're really struggling and there are some people who really struggled through first year and now they're struggling um so it's very different, everyone's going though different stages.

Despite participants expressing developing increasing acceptance of the self and limitations through training, participants frequently compared themselves to other

trainees in order to identify their own limitations, suggesting the importance of guidance in personal and professional development.

Chun described development as having many parts, and said that she felt “behind” trainees in some aspects of development and “ahead” in others:

Ch: I can say that I really, really do believe that there is no end point in development, but I do think that I’m ahead in some areas and that in other areas I just need to do a lot more work on.

Although participants described encountering many challenges through their path and process of personal and professional development, Lachlan describes that the intense feelings of guilt and responsibility he felt as a trainee have significantly reduced as a result of his training:

L: becoming more aware of the boundaries of responsibility, becoming more aware that this is not, this is a very odd, strange job, but it’s not some sort of cult where you’re responsible for people’s lives as well, it’s just a job.

3.4 Theoretical Superordinate Theme Summary

This superordinate theme found that participants had similar definitions for personal and professional development but that they had differing lived experiences of personal and professional development in practice. The anxiety and defensiveness displayed by participants in relation to this implies the existence of common definitions and discourses about personal and professional development and a fear that participants are not developing as they should.

Furthermore, this superordinate theme found that participants did not take active steps to develop, rather personal and professional development were experienced as an unconscious process that no trainees had explicitly thought about prior to the interview.

3.5 Technical Superordinate Theme Summary

Personal and professional development were experienced as highly individualised processes. Trainees experienced a combination of activities as important to their development, with the significance of the experience being more important in facilitating development than the activity itself, although individual participants voiced preferences for certain activities. As such, trainees were not able to discuss personal and professional development exclusively in relation to their client work and trainees also voiced differences about what personal development activities they found useful in the training context.

Despite the individualised process of development, all participants experienced challenges integrating the personal and professional aspects of themselves in training. Participants either focused on the personal or professional aspects of their development according to their needs and preferences. Through the process of development, trainees increased in confidence and clinical competence, began to develop an orientation to practice, and were able to integrate and boundary the personal and professional aspects of themselves in their therapeutic work so that the personal and professional could be simultaneously protected and utilised to improve therapeutic work with clients. Despite this development, participants also described that some personal difficulties had not been worked on and some activities were not engaged in due to avoidance.

The process of training was associated with personal struggles, both because of a loss of identity, due to the process of their personal and professional development and a fear of not developing correctly, due to their awareness of the importance of personal and professional development but the lack of discussion of it in training. Development was described as a messy and complex process, which made it difficult for participants to describe. However, challenges in discussing development were also interpreted as relating to the lack of active engagement in personal and professional development work as reported by participants and a lack of discussion or explicit implementation of personal development work in training. Although trainees did engage in activities inside and outside of training that can be interpreted as facilitating their personal and professional development, there was a lack of

identification among participants that these activities were for personal and professional development, reflecting their experience that personal and professional development were unconscious processes.

Discussion

4.1 Overview

The aim of this research was to understand final year trainee Counselling Psychologists' subjective experiences of the relationship between their client work and personal and professional development throughout training. The results of this research contain two main findings. Firstly, final year Counselling Psychology trainees were unable to discuss their personal and professional development in relation to client work specifically. They experienced their personal and professional development to be facilitated by the relevance of specific experiences to their developmental needs rather than experiencing the events, activities and experiences as having a direct facilitative effect themselves. Secondly, trainees experienced the process of their personal and professional development as confusing and challenging, which was associated with anxious feelings and thoughts that were expressed or demonstrated throughout the interviews. I interpreted this as both a reflection of the impact of training on their psychological wellbeing and as a lack of a shared understanding of what was expected from trainees in terms of personal and professional development during training. This discussion will examine the findings of this research in relation to existing theories and research. Clinical and research implications of the findings, as well as limitations of the current research, will also be discussed.

4.2 Conceptual Framework

Prior to discussing the main findings of this research, it is important to clarify the definitions of the concepts "personal development" and "professional development" as used in this chapter, and to comment on the range of literature that is elucidated to inform the discussion on the facilitation of these concepts. Professional development is broadly defined as the process by which professional skills and knowledge are acquired. Personal development is defined broadly as everything else that facilitates being a professional who works therapeutically with clients, especially the development of therapist qualities that are thought to effect therapeutic outcome. Although there is distinction between the concepts, they are viewed as part of the

same process, with personal development facilitating professional development and vice versa. I have chosen these definitions as they reflect both participants' experience, as presented in the Analysis chapter and also reflect the literature on the definition of personal and professional development (e.g. Elton-Wilson, 1994; McLeod, 1996; Wilkins, 1997) and relationship between personal and professional development (e.g. Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1996; Wilkins 1997). There is therefore continuity between the definitions of personal development and professional development throughout this thesis. The literature that pertains to personal and professional development is very large and although there has been much care and attention to defining personal development and professional development by theorists (e.g. Donati, 2003; Irving and Williams, 1999), the concepts continue to be used interchangeably and are not well-defined in research. Therefore literature that pertains to the definitions set out above has been included as it is relevant to participants' experience and academic definitions. Moreover, as in the Literature Review chapter, literature that focuses on all therapeutic professions, (e.g. counsellors, psychotherapists, Counselling Psychologists and Clinical Psychologists) is included as there is a lack of Counselling Psychology literature in this area and the aforementioned therapeutic professions are assessed to be sufficiently relevant to Counselling Psychology trainees' experience. There is a greater focus on the facilitation of personal development than professional development in this chapter, which reflects the participants' focus in the interviews and the results.

4.3 The Relationship Between the Results and Existing Literature

The finding of this research that participants were not able to focus specifically on their client work in relation to their personal and professional development was also found in existing research papers on the relationship between client work and personal and professional development (Neilson, 2008; Stahl et al., 2009; Turner et al., 2008). However, previous authors have not discussed the importance of other events and activities in facilitating personal and professional development. Similar to the current research's findings, Turner et al. (2008) found that participants experienced difficulties with confidence and learned about the process of therapy through working clinically. This learning is framed as being the result of working with clients exclusively, although Turner et al. reported that participants cited a

number of activities as being important to their development, such as writing notes and discussing work in supervision. These were spoken about generally with no information about the importance or meaning that these activities had for individual participants and no discussion of how these activities may interact with client work and other activities in the process of trainee learning. Likewise, the research by Stahl et al. (2009) found that participants calibrated self and technical knowledge from working with clients through a number of different activities, such as supervision and discussions with peers. However, participants' experience of this was spoken about generally, and there was no mention of individual differences between participants as to what types of experiences or activities were experienced as facilitative of their learning. Nielson (2008) found that his participants learned from a number of different activities, however he chose not to include these in the analysis due to his focus on client work. In the current research, participants experienced their personal and professional development to be facilitated by a number of different activities and events, such as personal therapy, discussions with peers, life events and supervision. Development was facilitated by the significance of the experience within the activity to the participant's self, rather than the activity being the cause of the facilitation itself. Thus although this research found similarities to Nielson, (2008), Stahl et al. (2009) and Turner et al. (2008) in terms of *if* and *what* participants learned through the practice of counseling, (that it enabled them to learn about their own personal difficulties and develop their technical skills) the findings of this research differ in finding differences among participants in terms of *why* and *how* participants developed, which may explain why participants discussed a number of different activities and experiences as being facilitative of their personal and professional development.

Whereas the broader research on the facilitation of personal and professional development (e.g. Irving & Williams, 1999; Macran & Sharipo; Robson & Robson, 2008) has found that some participants experienced negative affect as a result of participating in other activities such as personal therapy and personal development groups, research on the facilitation of personal and professional development through client work has found that negative experiences in therapy were framed as ultimately positive as they led to self and technical learning (Nielson, 2008; Stahl et al., 2009; Turner et al., 2008). It was posited in the Literature Review chapter that negative

experiences may not have been reported due to the focus on “learning” interview schedules of Neilson (2008), Stahl et al. (2009) and Turner et al. (2008), and the current research took particular interest in possible negative experiences of trainees of client work. The word “learn” was perceived to implicitly represent a positive process thus particular attention was given to the language of the interview schedule in the current research (see Appendix E for Interview Schedule) so that possible negative experiences could be shared. However, the findings of this research support the existing findings of Stahl et al. (2009) and Turner et al. (2008), in that while negative experiences were found to be emotionally challenging, they were viewed as opportunities for reflection and learning. The finding that all participants experienced the practice of therapy positively may be explained by the psychological theory of the wounded healer (Jung, 1951), which suggests that the therapeutic relationship has a reciprocal positive effect on both the client and the therapist as it allows both parties to heal their psychological wounds (see Literature Review). Despite efforts to facilitate discussion on negative experiences in therapy, it may be that participants framed negative experiences as ultimately positive due to the potential ethical implications of discussing negative therapeutic experiences and/or potential process issues (see Reflexive Statement and Limitations and Further Research).

Moving away from the activity of client work itself as being facilitative of personal and professional development, the current research found that participants experienced their past personal and professional development to have been facilitated by the significance of an experience to them, rather than specific activities having facilitative effects themselves. This supports one of the findings of Farber’s (1983) research, which found that psychotherapists rated changes they experienced as part of their training as only “somewhat” related to their client work, and Myers’ (2001) research, which chose to focus on therapists’ significant experiences with one client.

The broader research on the facilitation of personal and professional development provides some insights about the process of trainees’ personal and professional development in this research. For example, Kolb’s (1984) learning style theory may explain why certain participants in the current study expressed a preference for some activities over others. For example, in Kolbian terms, Sameera’s dislike for group work may be explained by her being a “reflector”, (somebody who stands back from

events and thinks before acting), Lachlan's like of experiential work may be explained by him being an "activist", (somebody who engrosses themselves in the here and now), and Chun, who expressed enjoying organising her learning and development with her personal tutor could be described as a "pragmatist", (somebody who concentrates on practical issues and likes to see a link between what they learn and how they can use it).

The results of the current research are supported by the pluralistic stance of the concept of the self as the development of the self is facilitated by a number of different activities and experiences which are linked to the significance of one's own unique standpoint. This corresponds with Johns' (1996) discussion about the complexity of the concept of "the self", which is described as complex, multi-faceted, socially-embedded, socially-constructed, even illusory, depending on one's own epistemological perspective. As a result, Johns (1996) suggests that we must move beyond a simplistic understanding of the self and personal development work must be approached with openness and flexibility. Johns (2012) suggests that personal development may be facilitated by a number of activities in life and work, and that specific activities that pertain to development are only partly responsible for trainee development. This position suggests a complex process and interaction between different activities in the process of personal and professional development, as found in the current research. This broad and complex view of the facilitation of personal and professional development has been acknowledged, discussed and explored by theorists and researchers. Fitzpatrick, Kovalak and Weaver (2010) created a process model of the development of trainees' theory of practice from the analysis of 17 masters-level trainee counsellors' weekly development journals. They found that a number of different activities interact with each other as factors for the development of their theoretical orientation, with the individuals' personal philosophies or values being one of the predominant influences. This corresponds with the current research where it was found that certain meaningful experiences are facilitative of personal and professional development, and the trainee's individual values-based preferences for certain activities are important in the facilitation of personal and professional development. Ronnestad and Skovholt (2003) reformulated the results of their previous research (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1993) and created stages and themes of counsellor and therapist development from the data of 100 qualitative interviews. On

the facilitation of professional development, there were similar findings to the current research on personal and professional development: they found that development was a long, slow, continuous process that is also erratic: and that participants experienced differing processes of change, such as noticing change retrospectively, experiencing intense rapid change brought on by specific critical incidents, and experiencing reoccurring cycles of a specific difficulty, such as reoccurring difficulties with confidence (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003). Also similar to the current research, they found that interpersonal sources such as supervisors, trainers, peers, friends and family members had a greater influence on professional development than 'impersonal' sources of influence such as reading and writing coursework (Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2003).

Although it is acknowledged in the general literature and theories of personal and professional development that a number of different activities are important in the process of personal and professional development, and research on the facilitation of personal and professional development has found that trainees experience activities differently (e.g. Grimmer & Tribe, 2001; Irving & Williams, 1999; Knight et al., 2010; Robson & Robson, 2008), specialised research on the facilitation of personal and professional development continues to focus on development in relation to isolated activities or events. For example, although both Robson and Robson (2008) and Knight et al. (2010) found that some trainees did not find personal development groups worthwhile, both collectives suggest that groups should be improved so that they can be of benefit to all, rather than acknowledging individual trainees' diverse needs and preferences for personal development in training. While it may be important for research to be generated to assess the efficacy of certain activities, such as personal therapy, which is mandatory for Counselling Psychology trainees and incurs a financial cost, the focus in the research on specific activities has not only shifted the focus on this literature area onto the activity itself and *if* and *what* trainees develop, thus missing the complexity of *how* and *why* trainees develop, a "one size fits all" approach may also deny the diversity of trainees. For example, Richards (1999 as cited in Galbraith & Hart, 2007) suggests that "traditional" personal development methods such as personal development groups are culturally insensitive as they are not suitable for all cultures. Richards (1999 as cited in Galbraith & Hart, 2007) proposes that the diversity of trainees should be recognised and that trainees

should be able to engage in activities that are relevant to them. The focus of this research on the facilitation of personal and professional development through client work may have allowed trainees' diversity to be more evident than research that focuses on specific training activities as the practice of clinical work is not entered into to facilitate personal and professional development. It may be that this allowed a broader discussion of personal and professional development than research on traditional activities where trainees know that personal and professional development is a direct aim and they have more of a sense of the contribution of the particular activity to their development.

The finding of this study that training is experienced as a challenging and confusing time for trainees is supported by much theoretical literature and research, including the psychological theory of mentalisation (Fonagy, Gergely, Jurist & Target, 2002), and the theory of professional individuation (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992), which both suggest that development involves a reflection on and understanding of the relationship between self and other. These findings can also be explained by Robinson's (1974) four stage model of learning, which suggests that as individuals learn, they move from "unconscious incompetence" (where they are unaware of what they do not know) through "conscious incompetence" (where they are aware of what they do not know) and "unconscious competence" (where they are unaware of their assimilation of knowledge), to "conscious competence" (where they are aware of what they know). Robinson (1974) suggests that stage two and three are the most challenging for learners as they involve a realisation that there is much to learn and constructs of reality and identity are challenged. The loss of self as a result of building awareness as implied within Robinson's (1974) model of learning, mentalisation theory and the theory of professional individuation (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992) corresponds with the finding in this research that many participants experienced anxiety and a loss of self as a result of gaining personal insights at the beginning of training. Ronnestad and Skovholt (2003) suggest that the struggles of early training can be characterised by "seven struggles", which can also be applied to the findings of this research: acute performance anxiety and fear; illuminated scrutiny by professional gatekeepers; porous or rigid emotional boundaries; the fragile and incomplete practitioner self; inadequate conceptual maps; glamorised expectations; and the acute need for positive mentors. Moreover, Rizq (2006) suggests that

Counselling Psychology's alignment with pluralism may cause "considerable emotional strain" (Rizq, 2006, p. 614) in Counselling Psychology trainees specifically, as Counselling Psychology trainees must balance theoretical ambiguity as well as the ambiguity of clinical work associated with therapeutic training.

While participants' difficulties during training can be viewed as part of the process of learning and training, as well as the challenges of grappling with theoretical pluralism, theorists have suggested that personal and professional development can be enhanced through active engagement in the process of personal development (e.g. Kelly, 1993; Kolb, 1984; Schon, 1983). These theories can provide some insights about the challenges that participants had in expressing the process of their development throughout the interview. Theorists such as Kelly (1991), Kolb (1984) and Schon (1983) have emphasised the importance of reflection in the process of learning. Cross and Papadopolous (2001) use Kelly's (1991) five-stage "experience cycle" as a model for conceptualising the process of personal development. Kelly (1991) suggests that in order to develop from an experience, individuals must: be open to or in "anticipation" of experiences and possible development; have "commitment" to view experience as an opportunity for change; "encounter" the experience by being actively engaged in reflecting on the meaning of the experience for them; evaluate the encounter stage through a period of "confirmation/disconfirmation", which in turn will facilitate the resolution of the final stage of the cycle, that of "constructive realism". Although participants in this research did report an openness to experience and that their development had been facilitated by reflecting on pertinent experiences, some of the difficulties that participants had when discussing the process of their development may also be explained by Schon's (1984) theory that professionals learn through "reflecting on action": that learning will remain tacit unless they are actively engaged in processing their learning as it occurs. Turner et al. (2008) allude to Schon's (1984) notion of reflection on action, finding that participants' learning through client work was limited if their personal and professional development was not perpetually reflected on through writing their experiences in a diary. All participants in this study described that they had not actively engaged in their development or reflected on it prior to the interview, which allows the inference that their knowledge has remained tacit, explaining why they experienced difficulty reflecting on their personal and

professional development in the interview. Schon (1984) suggests that optimal learning cannot take place without reflection on action.

Further to the importance of reflection on action in facilitating personal and professional development, research has also suggested that there is a need to be guided by others in the developmental process. Theorists have suggested that the process of developing a professional identity is both intrapersonal and interpersonal (e.g. Connor, 1994; Gibson, Dollarhide & Moss, 2010). In terms of the intrapersonal process of professional identity, Auxier, Hughes and Kline (2003) suggest that trainees are involved in a cycle of autonomy and dependence on professional others in forming their own professional identity, which is based on the results of a grounded theory. In the first phase of the cycle, trainees rely on external authority figures for conceptual and experiential learning, and evaluation. In the second phase, trainees rely more on post-hoc learning from feedback from their supervisors and trainers on their clinical and academic work. Trainees then move to the third phase, where supervisors are internalised and this voice becomes an internal locus of evaluation that allows trainees to make their own examinations of their practice, based on their supervisors' feedback (Auxier, et al. 2003). The interpersonal process of professional identity involves the role of the professional community in shaping the role of the trainee. For example, O'Byrne and Rosenberg (1998) proposed a sociological perspective on identity development, in which the trainee becomes acculturated to the professional community through guided participation in the community. Through observation, supervision, consultation and practice they become professional "natives" who are "socialised" to the professional community; they learn the language of the professional community and learn what to expect from being a part of that community. Participants in the current research discussed the importance of their clinical supervisors and personal therapists in developing and shaping their personal and professional identities. While university trainers were viewed as sources of professional development, there was anxiety among some participants in regards to trainers' roles as examiners. Moreover, participants reported that there was little discussion about their personal development at university and they did not know what trainers expected of them in terms of personal development. This finding is consistent with Donati (2003), who found that trainees and trainers were dissatisfied

with what they perceived to be a lack of discussion and integration of personal development in training.

Despite the experience of participants in the current study that they did not know what was expected of them in terms of their personal development in training, theorists have written about the importance of trainees having clear goals and criteria for their personal development. As the self of the counsellor is viewed as an essential ingredient in the potential for effective therapeutic outcome, (e.g. Wampold, 2001) work on developing the self is an assessed component of Counselling Psychology doctorate programmes and professional practice guidelines on this exist (BPS, 2005). As such, academics have expressed that there is a need for trainees to be aware of what is expected of them in terms of personal development so that trainees can be effectively assessed (Donati, 2003). BPS (2005) professional practice guidelines stress that it is essential that trainees develop self-knowledge and engage in continuous personal and professional development to ensure and maintain ethical and competent practice. Some theorists have developed models and curricula for personal development in training (e.g. Connor, 1994; Mearns, 1997; Johns, 2012; Hughes & Youngston, 2012). Although definitions for personal and professional development have been developed, (e.g. Donati & Watts, 2005; Irving & Williams, 1999; Wilkins, 1997) it is acknowledged that the meaning of personal development differs according to a number of factors, such as theoretical orientation (Johns, 1996). Consequently, personal development criteria are flexible, with the expectation that trainees and trainers know what is expected and can assess personal development, while acknowledging that the process and path of personal development is by no means a prescriptive one. For example, Hughes and Youngston (2012) have created a model for Clinical Psychologists' personal development with the acknowledgement that personal development is not a fixed process but with the intention of helping trainees understand what the process of development might be like. Furthermore, Johns (1996; p.53) suggests that "personal development in in-depth training courses should be proactive as well as reactive: it needs to be planned, at least as an outline, in addition to responding to what happens incidentally". In summary of her personal development curricula, Johns (2012) suggests that trainers should discuss and ask trainees to reflect on the aims of the course; the aims of counselling; and possible outcomes of development. She recommends that trainers should develop a

framework for training based on the ethical principles of the training and course philosophy and in line with accreditation requirements; outline the learning objectives for personal development; identify what competencies trainees should be judged against, and assess trainees' development at the end of training. Despite the existence of clear and structured personal development curricula (e.g. Hughes & Youngston, 2012; Johns, 2012), participants in the current research did not report their personal and professional development at university to be proactive or a clear and structured part of the course programme.

Although curricula have been developed, previous research on how personal development is implemented in training (Spencer, 2006) suggests that trainers experience the practice guidelines of the BPS to be vague and that this contributes to the difficulty of implementing personal development in training as it is difficult to define and assess. US authors (Hensley, Smith & Thompson, 2003) have written about the challenges in assessing their counselling trainees, suggesting that the challenges are cross-cultural. The results of the current research suggest that efforts of authors who have defined the concept "personal development" (e.g. Donati & Watts, 2005; Irving & Williams, 1999) and theorists who have developed curricula for personal development (e.g. Connor, 1994; Mearns, 1997; Johns, 2012; Hughes & Youngston, 2012) have done little to clarify the confusion of personal development training. Rather, the results of this research suggest that definitions of personal and professional development have increased trainees' anxiety and defensiveness around personal and professional development, as participants do not experience their development according to these definitions and as such believe that they are not developing as they "should" be.

Participants' lack of understanding of what was expected of them in terms of their personal and professional development, and the lack of reflection in action expressed by participants in the interviews, may explain the anxiety and defensiveness expressed by participants in relation to discussing their training experiences and in response to the interview questions. Participants did allude to research in relation to their experiences of training, however such research was often used as a blueprint of how participants felt they should be progressing. Many participants reported feeling

angry and disappointed by what they saw as a lack of trainer input and support for trainees' individual personal development outside of structured course activities.

Although trainees reported a lack of communication from trainers throughout training, their difficulties were reported as being more acute at the beginning of training and eased off as participants gained a theory of practice, which is consistent with the findings of Gibson, Dollarhide and Moss (2010) that trainees progress from focusing on the validation of professional others to focusing on self-validation. Ronnestad and Skovholt (2003) also found that trainees develop a theory of practice and increase in confidence as training progresses. Applying psychoanalytic theory to trainees' emotions, the stress and anxiety associated with early training may have led to the unconscious employment of defense mechanisms such as projection in order to reduce anxiety. For example, the finding in the current research that trainees felt that they were being watched by a punitive other, and were frightened of talking about training insecurities with trainers, could be a projection of unwanted feelings of guilt that trainees had about their growing awareness of their own personal difficulties in working clinically. This may explain why, after experiencing personal and professional development throughout the course of training, the responsibility that they placed on trainers in aiding their personal and professional development lessened. Although some of the feelings about trainers that trainees expressed can be viewed as projections, trainees' disclosures that there was not a clear programme for personal development in training, need also to be taken at face value. The current research suggests that the emotions that trainees experienced in relation to their trainers can be seen as resulting from an interaction between three factors: the natural process of development, where the trainee experiences negative affect due to a loss of self; a lack of an implementation of personal development curricula and criteria; and a lack of communication about the curricula and the criteria by which they may be assessed.

4.4 Implications

The discussion of the results suggests two main findings of this research: firstly, there are problems with the existing research on the facilitation of personal and professional development in that research on the facilitation of personal and professional

development does not sufficiently address or explicitly acknowledge the complexity of *why* and *how* personal and professional development are facilitated; and secondly, there are problems with the way that personal development work is implemented in training in that trainees are not engaging in active personal development work and there are difficulties in communication between trainees and trainers regarding the expectations of trainees' personal development and the criteria by which they are assessed. The findings of the research will be more comprehensively summarised below. Clinical and research implications of each finding, and suggestions for further research and training practices will be proposed. Limitations of the current research will also be discussed.

4.4.1 Problems with the existing facilitation research.

4.4.1.1 Summary of findings.

The existing research on the facilitation of personal and professional development focuses on specific training activities, such as personal therapy (e.g. Grimmer & Tribe, 2001); personal development groups (e.g. Robson & Robson, 2008); and reflective journals (e.g. Wright, 2005). However, the findings of the current research suggest that development is a complex process, which is facilitated by the relevance of specific experiences to the trainee's individual developmental needs and their individual values-based preferences for particular activities, rather than individual activities having separate facilitative effects themselves. These findings reflect theories of personal and professional development processes (e.g. Fitzpatrick, Kovalak & Weaver, 2010; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992) and professional identity formation (e.g. Auxier, Hughes & Kline, 2003; Gibson, Dollarhide & Moss, 2010), yet the findings in the current research of *how* and *why* development takes place for trainees differ to the focus of other research on the facilitation of personal and professional development, which has focused on *if* trainees' development is facilitated by a specific activity and *what* trainees learn from the activity itself.

The findings of the current research suggest that the existing research on the facilitation of personal and professional development may be flawed, as it implies a causal relationship between specific activities and personal and professional

development, thus preventing a detailed and rich picture of the complexities and idiosyncrasies of individuals' development. Despite the existence of a large body of theory and research that has found the process of trainee development to be a broad and complex process which is facilitated by many different activities (e.g. Johns, 1996; Fitzpatrick, Kovalak & Weaver, 2010; Skovholt & Ronnestad, 1992), this knowledge has not been integrated into the facilitation literature adequately. Although it seems likely that academics who research the facilitation of personal and professional development are aware of and acknowledge the involvement of a number of different activities in facilitating personal and professional development, this needs to be made explicit in their research to put their findings of *if* and *what* trainees develop into perspective. It is proposed that focusing on *how* and *why* trainees develop would enhance the findings of this literature area. Although it is acknowledged that focusing on *if* and *what* trainees develop also makes a valuable contribution to knowledge in assessing the efficacy of particular personal development activities, such as personal therapy, this research suggests that the results of the existing facilitation literature should not be taken at face value and be interpreted in meaning that particular activities are sufficient as developmental facilitators for all trainees. This position is consistent with the suggestion of many theorists who have argued that attending personal therapy should not be sufficient in meeting the personal development requirement of training (e.g. Mearns, 2003).

4.4.1.2 Implications for research and practice

Focusing on *how* and *why* trainees develop in research would allow a greater understanding of the complexities and individualities of development has implications for training practices. This may allow trainers to facilitate personal and professional development in trainees more effectively by implementing a personalised and flexible approach to development practice and assessment in training programmes. Due to Counselling Psychology's commitment to evidence-based practice (Corrie, 2010), it is likely that there is a link between the focus on specific activities in facilitating personal and professional development in trainees in the literature, and the lack of a personalised and flexible personal development curricula as discussed in the training implications below. It is therefore proposed that research that seeks to understand the relationship between specific activities and personal and professional development

should explicitly acknowledge the complexities of the process of personal and professional development and the importance in a number of different activities, events and processes in its facilitation so that a causal relationship is not implied.

4.4.2. Problems with the implementation of personal development

4.4.2.1 Summary of findings.

This research found that trainees are not actively engaging in personal development work. Although trainees reported that they had developed, theorists who have defined personal and professional development suggest that personal development requires active engagement (e.g. Irving & Williams, 1999) and theorists who specialise in learning theories suggest that optimal learning cannot take place without perpetual reflection (e.g. Kelly, 1999; Schon, 1984). Trainees' difficulties in discussing their personal and professional development and the disclosure of each participant that they had not reflected on their personal and professional development in training prior to participating in this research suggests that participants are not developing to their full potential.

The discussion proposed that the lack of trainee engagement is related to trainees' experience of not understanding what specifically is expected of them in terms of personal development, apart from in the broadest terms that personal development is integral to clinical and ethical competence. In correspondence with Spencer (2006), trainees reported that there was no clear structure for personal development in training and that personal development was not well integrated into their training programmes. Trainees reported that although they had some personal development activities in training, such as experiential groups, these were not experienced as being enjoyable for all or sufficient in satisfying the personal development component. The findings that no one activity is sufficient in personal development is consistent with the position of Dryden, Horton and Mearns (1995), and the differences in perceptions of particular activities reflects research that has found that not all participants experience particular activities such as personal development groups or personal therapy as useful. There has been much debate in the literature with regard to the mandatory requirement for personal therapy as some studies have found that some trainees do not

experience personal therapy as helpful to their personal development (e.g. Makaskill, 1988). The mandatory requirement for personal therapy made by regulators and the requirement of some therapeutic training courses for trainees to engage in personal development groups has stimulated ethical debates regarding trainees' informed consent to participate in such activities (e.g. Corey, 2000; Legg, 1999). However, existing research on personal development groups (e.g. Knight, Sperlinger & Maltby, 2010; Robson & Robson, 2008) suggest that activities groups should be adapted to be of benefit for all, whereas the findings of this research suggest that personal development training could be enhanced through the development of a more flexible and personalised personal development curriculum for trainees. Further to differences in trainees' perceptions of specific development activities, trainees reported that there was a lack of communication between trainers and trainees in regards to their personal development, with some trainees reporting that they were frightened of talking to trainers about their personal development needs. This was interpreted as reflecting trainees' lack of understanding that personal development is an idiosyncratic process and a lack of knowledge of how their personal development was being assessed by trainers. Although research has found that there is confusion among trainers (Donati, 2003; Spencer, 2006) and trainees (Donati, 2003) in regards to the personal development component of training, literature searches could not find any research that focuses on the relationship between the confusion of the personal development component and trainee anxiety.

4.4.2.2 Implications for research and practice.

The finding of this research that trainees are not developing optimally and that there is no clear personal development criteria in training has regulatory implications (BPS, 2005) and ethical implications as personal development is a mandatory component of Counselling Psychology training and research has found there to be a relationship between the therapist's self and professional competence (e.g. Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2010; Wampold, 2001). Furthermore, participants' experience of a lack of guidance from trainers may cause trainees unnecessary emotional distress, particularly at the beginning stages of training (Gibson, Dollarhide & Moss, 2005).

In terms of future research, it would be useful to understand how different Counselling Psychology courses implement personal development in training and why, and to investigate the anxiety that was expressed by trainees in this research by researching trainees' and trainers' experience of the personal development component of training. This would allow a greater understanding of the relationship between the necessary struggles associated with the natural process of development, and the unnecessary struggles associated with a lack of engagement in development work and a lack of communication of expectations between trainers and trainees.

4.5 Towards a Curriculum for Personal Development

The findings of this research and corresponding literature can be utilised to suggest the beginnings of a personal development curriculum for Counselling Psychology training that could be utilised by Counselling Psychology trainers. I suggest that personal development curricula need to be clear, structured and supportive in order for trainees to develop optimally.

4.5.1 Aims.

The proposed curriculum has two main aims: for trainees' knowledge of their personal and professional development to become "active" through "reflection on action" (Schon, 1983) and through continual engagement in personal development; and for trainees to develop an understanding of how they learn (Kolb, 1976) and to engage in personal development activities that they experience as facilitative of their personal and professional development.

4.5.2 Methods

Trainees' personal development would be facilitated by two main training methods; firstly, a personal development module in the first semester of training that would set the framework for personal development work throughout training; and secondly, trainees will be encouraged to actively engage in their development through "reflection on action" (Schon, 1983).

4.5.2.1 Personal development module.

The proposed personal development module would be implemented in the first semester of year 1. This module would aim to convey a clear and structured personal development curriculum so that trainees are aware that they must engage in personal development work and they will be informed of the criteria by which they will be assessed. Theorists (e.g. Johns, 2012) suggest personal development curricula and criteria should be clear and structured so that the personal development component of training can be evidenced and assessed. Furthermore, Wheeler (2002) suggests that a clearer understanding of the expectations of personal development work would reduce trainee anxiety.

The personal and professional development module would have three main foci: firstly, to introduce students to regulatory requirements for personal and professional development and theories so that trainees are aware of what is expected of them and will be aware that there is no one correct way to develop; secondly, trainees will be encouraged to reflect on their motivations for training, their development so far and their learning preferences so that trainees engage in reflection from the start of their training (Johns, 2012) and are able to identify their learning styles (Kolb, 1976); and thirdly, trainees will be introduced to different activities that may facilitate their personal and professional development through “taster” sessions (e.g. an experiential group one week, a group discussion the next week). After the module’s completion, trainees will be encouraged to engage in activities that they enjoy in order to facilitate their development through the rest of training (for example, trainees could create their own groups at university or find them elsewhere e.g. the BPS.)

References of theories and research, as well as details of the course structure, assessment, suggestions for personal development activities and resources would be provided to trainees in a ‘personal development pack’ in semester 1.

4.5.2.2 Reflection on action.

Trainees will be encouraged to perpetually reflect on action (Schon, 1983) so that the potential for development is maximised. Methods for facilitating reflection on action

can be selected by the trainee but suggestions include personal and professional development journals (Rizq, 2010), drawing (Turner et al. 2009), and discussions with others (Richards, 1999 as cited in Galbraith & Hart, 2007). Trainees would also be given specific themes or topics to reflect on monthly, such as the family, personal therapy and what it means to be a Counselling Psychologist so that personal development is both 'active' and 'reactive' (Johns, 1996).

4.5.2.3 Integration of personal development.

Steps would be taken to ensure that the personal development component would be represented throughout training. As personal development and professional development are inextricably linked, students would be asked to reflect on their learning in reference to their personal development in all taught components of training. Trainees would be encouraged to reflect in a way that is helpful to them, for example, some may want to discuss their reflections with the whole group or in small groups, while others may choose to write or draw reflections. Personal development will also be integrated into coursework through a demonstration of reflective practice in relation to specific elements of clinical work, such as reflecting on the motivations behind the utilisation of a particular intervention, and in relation to broader academic topics such as reflecting on one's own beliefs and preferences regarding working with a particular therapeutic model or population.

4.5.3 Assessment.

Assessment would occur bi-annually, at the middle and end of each academic year. This would involve a meeting with a personal tutor, where there would be a discussion about the trainee's personal development and its relationship to professional development (this assessment strategy would be made explicit during the year 1 module). The tutor will be able to assess whether the student is engaging in their development and if their learning is active, thus meeting regulatory and ethical requirements. During the tutorial, the rationale for trainees' selection of activities would be presented to ensure that trainees are not avoiding certain activities that would be useful for them to engage in. The tutorial will have an evaluative function,

however the process of the interview also has a facilitative function in stimulating reflection and making knowledge active.

4.5.4 Personal development culture.

Academics specialising in identity formation (e.g. Auxier, Hughes & Kline, 2003) suggest that for trainees there is an interpersonal element to identity formation that relies on the professional community in shaping trainees' professional identities. Theorists have suggested that it is not desirable to implement the same personal development curricula in each course as each course has its own underlying philosophy and epistemological stance (Johns, 1996). However, Counselling Psychology's alignment with pluralism means that one theoretical approach is not favoured over another; Counselling Psychology trainers have often had diverse clinical trainings and align themselves with differing theoretical schools, and trainees are encouraged to find their own orientation to theory and practice through training. As such, it is questionable whether a unified Counselling Psychology culture could develop in individual trainings to be of benefit to trainees in the process of their identity formation. Further research on trainers' perspectives on the development of a course culture could provide new information about the complex task of facilitating personal and professional development.

4.6 Limitations and Further Research

It may be possible to suggest that this research is limited in that the findings of the research do not correspond neatly to the initial specific aims of the research. This research aimed to gain a greater understanding of how and why client work facilitates personal and professional development since while survey studies have found that client work is rated as the most important factor in personal and professional development (e.g. Donati, 2003; Orlinsky, Bottermans & Hunt, 2001), there is a lack of information about how and why client work is essential to personal and professional development in the existing qualitative literature (see Literature Review). This research aimed to gain a deeper understanding of trainees' "experience" of client work by simultaneously allowing participants to speak freely about how and why client work was important to their development, thus generating

information that could be used by trainers to enhance training practices, while also allowing participants to discuss possible negative experiences of therapy which may not have been disclosed in previous research due to methodological issues (see Literature Review). However, this deeper investigation of participants' experience of development found that participants experienced a number of different activities as important to their development, according to their own personal needs and preferences. Previous research on client work (e.g. Neilson, 2008; Stahl et al., 2009; Turner et al., 2008) has found that trainees discuss a number of different experiences and activities as important to their development, however these findings were not discussed in relation to how and why development occurred and client work was discussed on its own. The findings of this research suggest that it is essential to acknowledge that a range of activities facilitate development as this knowledge provides a greater understanding of how and why personal and professional development are facilitated, which in turn allows a greater understanding of trainees needs and provides an evidence base for personal development training methods. Thus, while this research is limited in its ability to discuss the specific importance of client work, as it initially set out to do, acknowledging the importance of a number of different activities, experiences and practices provides a richer and more representative impression of the personal development experiences and needs of trainees and provides an evidence base for the implementation of personal development training curricula that focus on trainees' individual needs.

The findings of the current research also incite further questions that highlight the limitations of this research and suggest areas of further research. These questions, and a summary of how these questions could be researched, are outlined below.

4.6.1 Why have researchers focused on one activity?

The findings of the current research suggest that the tendency of researchers to investigate personal and professional development in relation to specific activities prevents knowledge on how and why trainees develop. It is perhaps unusual that activities are often investigated in isolation as the wider literature on personal and professional development acknowledges the importance of many different activities and acknowledges complexity. It is suggested in this research that previous

researchers may have investigated the contribution of specific activities in the facilitation of personal and professional development because they are theorised to improve therapeutic outcome, yet there is no empirical evidence that this is the case. Further research on how trainers conceptualise the facilitation of personal and professional development would illuminate the dissonance between the broader theoretical literature and the specialist facilitation literature in this topic.

4.6.2. What is the rationale for current personal and professional development curricula?

This research found that trainees do not know what is expected of them in terms of personal and professional development, however this research is limited in its ability to explain why this is the case. While previous research has investigated how some courses implement personal and professional development in training (Moller, Alilovic & Mundra, 2008), there is no research on why particular methods are chosen and it is unclear why trainees are unaware of personal development methods and assessment in training. Research on trainers' perspectives of this would provide useful information about trainers' understanding of personal and professional development and their understanding of the confusion of trainees in relation to this area of training.

4.6.3. What are the parameters of necessary and unnecessary anxiety in Counselling Psychology training?

This research found that many trainees were experiencing high levels of anxiety as a result of training. Many theorists and researchers suggest that anxiety is a natural response to change, however trainees also suggested that some of the anxiety experienced was a result of not understanding what was expected of them in training, which raises ethical questions about trainees' experience of anxiety. A deeper investigation into the process of anxiety in training would provide some clarity to this complex topic and could inform future training methods.

4.6.4. Are reflective practitioners better practitioners?

Although participants in this research expressed a link between personal and professional development and clinical competence, Grimmer and Tribe (2001) suggest that a more reflexive practitioner may not be a more competent one. Further research is therefore needed to assess the relationship between personal and professional development and therapeutic outcome.

4.6.5. How does theoretical orientation effect personal and professional development?

The results of this research had roots in many different literature areas, not all of which could be discussed in detail, such as the influence of theoretical orientation and type of training on the experience of personal and professional development. This research did not investigate the relationship between theoretical orientation and personal and professional development as the participants were Counselling Psychology trainees and Counselling Psychology is a theoretically pluralistic discipline. Future research that focuses on factors such as theoretical orientation could provide useful insights into how such factors may influence the practice and experience of training.

4.6.6. How do Counselling Psychology trainees construct the issue of personal and professional development?

While this research found that that there was a difference between trainees' definitions and lived experiences of personal and professional development, and it was interpreted that there was an unwelcome discourse around personal and professional development, the employed method of IPA could not explain how trainees constructed this phenomenon. It is suggested that a discourse analysis on trainees' construction of personal and professional development would allow a greater understanding of the difficulties trainees have in conceptualising personal and professional development.

4.6.7. What about the unconscious?

This research found that trainees experienced a number of emotions and processes that they could not make sense of. From a psychoanalytic perspective, this confusion could be explained by the influence of unconscious motives. Furthermore, there is a possibility that process issues between the participants and researcher may have unconsciously biased the data (see Reflexive Statement). A greater examination of trainees' unconscious and interview process issues was not possible in this research due to the epistemology of IPA. IPA focuses on the meaning of lived experience therefore the method refutes the idea of an unconscious as it is not known and therefore not lived and experienced. A psychoanalytic analysis of trainees' relationship to their personal and professional development could illuminate some of the complexity and confusion of thought found in this research. Further research on the trainee-trainee researcher-participant dynamic would also provide useful information that could be utilised by academics who are interested in research methods and contribute to debates of research quality and validity.

4.7 Concluding Remarks

This research is original in its integration of many different theories and perspectives in relation to the facilitation of personal and professional development. Through its aim of capturing the complexities of trainees' personal and professional development, this research has proposed methods by which development might be researched more effectively and facilitated more efficiently in training. It is hoped that the knowledge generated in this research will contribute to trainers', researchers' and students' knowledge and evidence base for personal and professional development.

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Appendix A - Email to Course Leaders



26th June 2012

Dear Dr XXX,

I am a second year student on the Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology programme at London Metropolitan University and I am currently carrying out research on the relationship between third year Counselling Psychology trainees' personal and professional development and their clinical work.

I am emailing to ask if you could circulate my recruitment information to your third year trainees so that they can gain an understanding of the purpose of my research and I can invite them to participate in it. I have attached an invitation to participate, brief and consent form above.

This research has been approved by London Metropolitan University's Psychology department's research and ethics review panel. If there are any ethical or other application processes specific to your institution that I need to carry out prior to circulation, your instruction on these matters would also be much appreciated.

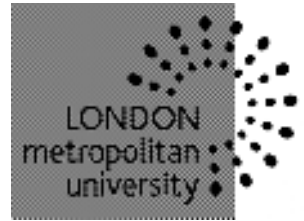
Thank you for your time in reading this email and please feel free to contact me by phone or email if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully,

Rebecca Byrne
Trainee Counselling Psychologist
London Metropolitan University

[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Appendix B- Invitation to Participate



Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

26th June 2012

Dear Trainee,

I am a second year student on the Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology programme at London Metropolitan University and I am currently carrying out research on the relationship between third year Counselling Psychology trainees' personal and professional development and their clinical work. There is little known about this topic and my hope is that the findings of this research could improve therapeutic outcome, inform training practices and increase awareness of trainee Counselling Psychologist's personal and professional development needs.

I am emailing you to invite you to participate in this research. Participation will include attending a 90-minute audio-recorded interview. The interview will take place in a location that is suitable to you so that you will not incur any financial cost as a result of your participation. Participation is entirely voluntary and if you are interested in participating, please see my participant brief and consent form attached above. If you would like to participate in this study or have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail or phone.

Thank you very much for your time in reading this email.

Yours faithfully,

Rebecca Byrne
Trainee Counselling Psychologist
London Metropolitan University.

Appendix C - Brief



London Metropolitan University, School of Psychology, Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology

Trainee Counselling Psychologists' experience of personal and professional development through client work.

Name of Investigator:	Rebecca	Byrne
Name of Supervisor:	Dr	Russel
	r.ayling@londonmet.ac.uk	Ayling
Name of Director of Studies:	Dr	Mark
	m.donati@londonmet.ac.uk	Donati

BRIEF

This doctoral research is being conducted at London Metropolitan University, School of Psychology, by Rebecca Byrne, and is being supervised by Dr Russel Ayling and Dr Mark Donati.

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the relationship between working with clients and third year trainee Counselling Psychologists' personal and professional development. There is little known about this topic and my hope is that the findings could provide new information that could be harnessed productively by psychologists to improve their therapeutic work with clients, therefore impacting on therapeutic outcome. The proposed research's findings could also contribute to Counselling Psychology trainers' knowledge and evidence base when developing training methods that aim to facilitate personal and professional development in trainees.

If you have any queries regarding the study, please do not hesitate to contact me, Dr Ayling and/or Dr Donati on the above email addresses.

You will be asked to take part in a semi-structured interview, which will take approximately 90 minutes. The interview will take place in a location that is suitable to you so that you will not incur any financial cost as a result of your participation. The purpose of the interview is to facilitate your exploration of the topic in a way that is meaningful to you.

The interview will be audio recorded. The audio recording will be password-protected and deleted after transcription. You will be given a personal id number so

that your audio file and transcript will be anonymised. This research abides by the British Psychological Society's Code of Human Research Ethics.

There is no obligation for you to take part in this study and you are free to withdraw your data from the study until 30 days after the interview. Thank you very much for your participation.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Byrne
Trainee Counselling Psychologist

Appendix D - Consent Form



London Metropolitan University, School of Psychology, Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology

PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT

- I have been informed of the nature and purpose of this study and I wish to participate.
- I understand that in the debriefing session at the end of my participation I will have further opportunity to ask any questions about the study.
- I understand that the data collected for this study is strictly confidential and I will not be identifiable in any report of this study. I am aware that after the audio recording has been transcribed, the recording will be deleted and all information which could identify me will be changed. I am aware of the limits to confidentiality, and that confidentiality will be breached if I am believed to be putting myself or others at immediate risk.
- I understand that the findings of this study will be accessible to others when this research is completed.
- I understand that I may depart from this study until 30 days after my participation without prejudice to me by contacting the researcher and quoting my id number.

Participant:

Print name

Date

Signature

Researcher:

Print name

Date

Signature

Appendix E - Interview Schedule

1) What do the concepts 'personal development' and 'professional development' mean to you?

Prompts:

-How would you define the concepts?

-Can you tell me a bit about your personal and professional development on the course so far?

2) Have you experienced your personal and professional development as separate to each other or part of the same process?

Prompt:

- Can you give me any examples of when your personal and professional development have influenced each other, and/or times when you have just developed personally or professionally?

3) How have you experienced the relationship between your work with clients and your personal and professional development so far?

Prompts:

- What role and significance has client work had on your personal and professional development?

- Could you give me some examples?

- Any positive/negative experiences?

4) How has the relationship between your client work and your personal and professional development changed over time?

Prompts:

- Could you tell me about any positive/negative experiences that have been important to you and how they have developed or influenced your therapeutic work in a positive or negative way?

- Could you tell me about an area of your personal life or a professional skill that you feel needs more working through or further development?

5) What do you think the function of personal and professional development is?

Prompt:

- Do you think that what you have learned personally and professionally has any reciprocal effect on your client work? If so, can you give me any examples of how, both positively and/or negatively?

6) What support on your training course would be helpful regarding what we have discussed?

Prompts:

- Is there anything that you have found helpful/unhelpful on your course regarding the facilitation of personal and professional development through client work?

- What do you think would be useful (e.g. contact between placement and course, pastoral care)?

7) Is there anything we haven't covered that you think is important?

8) What has the process of doing this interview been like for you?

Appendix F - Rationale for Interview Questions

Question 1: This question focuses on facilitating participants' definitions of personal and professional development, for two main reasons; firstly, theorists (e.g. Donati, 2003; Irving & Williams, 1999; Johns, 1996) have suggested that the concepts 'personal development' and 'professional development' mean different things to different people therefore participants' definitions were necessary in providing a conceptual framework for the rest of the interview. Secondly, theorists (e.g. Donati, 2003; Rizq, 2010; Sanders, 2004) have suggested that there are challenges implementing personal development into professional training programmes as the concepts are not well defined in the literature. Therefore this question also seeks to explore challenges in defining 'personal development' and 'professional development'.

Question 2: This question explores whether trainees agree with theories of personal and professional development in their belief that personal and professional development are experienced as being part of the same process, (Irving & Williams, 1999) and further aims to provide a conceptual framework for the following interview questions.

Question 3: This question aims to address the research question. Particular care was taken in the wording of this question so that negative as well as positive experiences could be disclosed. The second prompt further encourages any negative experiences to be shared with the researcher as previous research that is relevant to the facilitation of personal and professional development through client work has found that participants experience difficulties in practicing counselling to be positive as they facilitate personal and professional development (e.g. Turner, Gibson, Bennetts & Hunt, 2008; Stahl, Hill, Jacobs, Kleinman, Isenberg & Stern, 2009). The validity of the findings of these studies was questioned in the *Literature Review* chapter due to their use of the word 'learning'. Furthermore, research has found that activities that are designed for the facilitation of personal and professional development have not always been perceived as positive (e.g. Williams, Coyle & Lyons, 1999; Robson & Robson, 2008) and researchers have suggested that participants may be hesitant is

sharing negative experiences of counselling due to ethical implications (McLeod, 1990).

Question 4: This question aims to gain an understanding of the process of the relationship between personal and professional development and client work in order to provide insights about how personal and professional development might be facilitated. This question also aimed to explore in detail the affect that client work had on trainees, due to past research that has found that personal and professional development activities are experienced differently by different people, as explored in question 3.

Question 5: This question aimed to explore participants' responses to the mandatory requirement of personal development in training as previous research suggests that the complexity of personal development has made it a confusing element of training

Question 6: This question aims to gain an understanding of how personal development is implemented in training, as research has found (e.g. Spencer, 2006) that personal development activities are not clearly integrated in Counselling Psychology training and this question aims to explore whether this is still the experience of trainee Counselling Psychologists. Trainees were also asked about their professional development if they considered personal and professional development to be part of the same process.

Question 7: This question aims to facilitate talk about anything else that participants feel is relevant or meaningful to their experience, in line with the central aim of IPA, which is to explore experience in its own terms (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

Appendix G - Debrief



**London Metropolitan University, School of Psychology,
Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology**

The facilitation of personal development through client work: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of third year Trainee Counselling Psychologists' experience.

Name of Investigator:	Rebecca Byrne	[REDACTED]
Name of Supervisor:	Dr Russel Ayling	r.ayling@londonmet.ac.uk
Name of Director of Studies:	Dr Mark Donati	m.donati@londonmet.ac.uk

DEBRIEF

Thank you very much for participating in this study, which aims to understand third year trainee Counselling Psychologists' subjective experiences of the effect that client work has had on their personal and professional development and how they feel this development has taken place over time. This is the first piece of research that has investigated personal and professional development through client work within the field of Counselling Psychology, and I hope that this research will contribute to an evidence base for personal and professional development. The findings of this research could also improve therapeutic practice, inform training practices and increase awareness of trainee Counselling Psychologist's personal and professional development needs. If you have any queries regarding the study, please do not hesitate to contact me, Dr Ayling and/or Dr Donati on the above email addresses.

All the information you have provided will remain strictly confidential. Audio recordings will be password-protected and deleted after transcription, and all transcriptions will be anonymised.

If you have any further questions, are interested in the results of the research, or wish for your data to be withdrawn, please do not hesitate to contact me, the supervisor of this research, Dr Russel Ayling, and/or the director of studies and course leader, Dr Mark Donati, via the above email addresses. If your participation has raised any concerns, you may wish to contact your GP to access free counselling and psychological support.

Once again I would like to thank you for your participation in this study.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Byrne

Trainee Counselling Psychologist

Appendix H
Example of Developing Emergent Themes - Lachlan

Exploratory comments	Original transcript	Emergent themes
<p><i>Needs to think for a minute, complexity of concepts (“er, I guess”) ?</i></p> <p>Different meanings cognitive and experiential?</p> <p>Importance of the person in therapeutic work</p> <p><i>Complexity of the topic and definition (“er”) does not give definitions</i></p> <p>Personal and professional development the same process</p> <p>Professional dev = personal development</p> <p><u>multiple possible meanings for personal development</u></p> <p><u>Personal meanings important in definitions</u></p> <p><u>Lack of explicit definition, implicit meanings</u></p>	<p>I1: What do the concepts personal development and professional development mean to you?</p> <p>P1: Sure yep um personal development is I guess er if I think about it for a moment, I guess the two the two are conceptually distinct but I think they overlap in practice</p> <p>I2: mmm</p> <p>P2: And I think that er the in this sort of area of psychology or counseling er I think that er when we talk about professional development invariably we’re talking about personal development. Um well what I – I think it means different things to different people, put it that way. For me, I personal development, professional development is personal development but I’m also aware that that’s not the case for other people who might be doing the same thing as me, that they might think of it in different terms so I guess I for me they very much overlap, within the area of er being a psychological practitioner or a psychologist</p>	<p>Practice v theory</p> <p>Balancing definitions of the profession with idiosyncratic definitions</p> <p>Complexity of concepts</p> <p>Sameness v difference</p> <p>Implicit meaning of concepts</p>

<p><u>of personal and professional development</u> Personal more important than the professional Professional training to help the self Interrelated personal and professional 1- helping the self, 2- helping others</p> <p>Confusion- interesting comments but personal and professional development have not been defined</p>	<p>um it's been the whole thrust and of my whole experience over the past three to four years it's why I've done it really, to develop myself personally um and my professional goals just dovetail with that. So without being myself I I'm investing in helping myself primarily but I'm also helping others erm so yeah.</p> <p>I3: Ok, that's interesting, so how do you reckon you would define, what is personal development and professional development for you</p> <p>P3: mmm</p> <p>I4: I know that you say they're overlapping for you but</p>	<p>Experience v theory</p> <p>Related but professional privileges the personal</p>
<p><u>Able to talk personal and professional development but but difficult to pin down</u></p> <p>Personal development and difficulties –needs to give examples because challenging to explain?</p> <p><u>Meaning is in the activity rather than the definition?</u></p> <p>Personal development = personal therapy</p> <p>Challenge in defining due to its complexity</p>	<p>P4: mmm yeah erm I'd say it's a good question, I suppose um what is personal development? So I'll start off on that I guess um I would say that whatever things that I find difficult emotionally mentally erm they are the things that I most need help with within the personal therapy. So it's very simple for me what personal development is within the context of this course, counseling psychology, it's therapy um so I go to therapy four times a week and it's analytic therapy and it's I've been doing it for four years so it's err it's just</p>	<p>Personal development = overcoming personal difficulties</p> <p>Academic definition v experience and meaning?</p>

<p><u>Meaning is lost in its definition? “Jargon”</u></p> <p>Feeling v thinking</p> <p>Crude definitions v meaningful experiences</p> <p>Personal development from therapy and working with clients- different places and spaces for development?</p> <p>Link between the personal and the</p>	<p>become a very big part of my life so the development you could begin to break down and describe in a certain using a certain jargon you could say well it's to make my ego stronger and to er to know more about my blind spots um but somehow it doesn't do justice to the kind of feeling of developing within a relationship with your therapist which is a much more of an affective or feeling type thing um so when you describe the sort of the in processes so the strengthening of the ego or becoming knowing your blind spots, they're only kind of signposts but they don't really err or shortcuts, they're very crude ways of describing something that's a very rich experience, the therapeutic process so yeah, so that's the that's how I would define personal development in terms of therapy. Now there is another over the last three years I have developed an awful lot working as well so it's a it's a kind of how would you describe it, it's like a um you know they've got these cars that power on the electrical system and on the petrol</p> <p>I5: yep</p> <p>P5: It's like that's a very silly metaphor to put it, I can see how one thing catalyses the other um but the professional work brings up the</p>	<p>Meaning v theory</p> <p>Meaning is lost in definitions</p> <p>Development in different contexts- personal therapy and the practice of therapy</p> <p>Personal and professional development are</p>
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<p>professional – professional work catalyses personal development and vice versa</p> <p>Possible avoidance of problems</p> <p>Feedback between personal and professional development</p> <p>Different places important cycles of client work, supervision, personal therapy</p> <p>Personal difficulties played out in different spaces and activities – <u>potential for development everywhere</u></p> <p><u>Personal and professional catalyse one another but the experience of personal and professional development in different places and spaces catalyse one another as well</u></p> <p>Outcomes of development</p> <p>Increased confidence as a result of client work</p> <p>Acceptance of self and limitations</p> <p>Able to show the ‘self’ to others</p> <p><u>Awareness of psychological theories alleviates</u></p>	<p>personal stuff I work through um or work with or I don’t work with for that matter, and the vice versa I can see things in the personal development that catalyse the professional work, so it’s a very kind of um there’s a feedback between the two, because I kind of see how I’ve tested my own for example paranoia er to do with supervisors over the last say three years it’s really great because I can test my own paranoiac psyche cos that’s what a supervisor brings out in you if you have a latency, if you have a kind of any potential to be paranoid you sure as hell will with a supervisor because you know they’re, even the word ‘supervisor’ they can take on this super egoic function and they their supervisee their that other I so I think inevitably that’s where the overlap is but then that’s also where they catalyse each other um you know, now that I think about it it’s a very it’s a very creative thing if you stay with it, like. You can learn a lot about yourself and you get I got confidence from surviving working clinically and then becoming you know more you know, realising that I didn’t have to um you know be cured and that I could still be neurotic, certainly with certain supervisors er if not psychotic (laughs) you know, when I say psychotic I mean err in the unconscious sense that you could have a that you do react in</p>	<p>mutually enhancing processes</p> <p>Feedback and loops of development and different experiences in different places</p> <p>Many activities important in development</p> <p>Challenges occur in many settings and so does development</p> <p>Development of the self through difficulties in client work</p> <p>Development = self-acceptance</p> <p>Link between professional skills and</p>
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<p><u>some of the anxieties about the self??</u></p> <p>“cross hybridisation” of personal and professional development but also of personal and professional development experiences</p>	<p>discrete psychotic ways to things, you know erm such as um what’s the word I’m using what I meant? Yeah, to treat somebody as not as if they are your mother but they are your mother you know, and it’s very rapid, very automatic. So yeah I think it’s kind of cross-hybridisation of both both um jeez I don’t know why I’m using so many metaphors, it’s because I’ve been writing this morning (I and P laugh) I’m thinking in this really bizarre way perhaps.</p>	<p>decreased anxiety and self-acceptance?</p> <p>“cross-hybridisation” of personal and professional processes and experiences</p>
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